

The nic-nac

P 283;2

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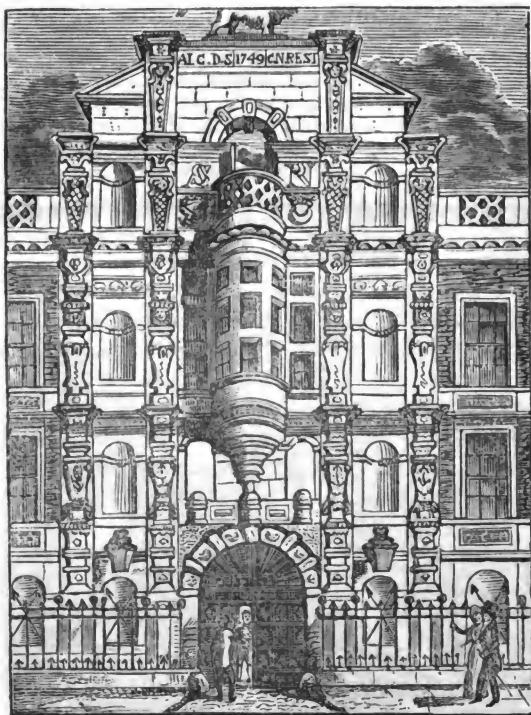
1918

Charles H. Patee

From his friend,

Thomas Kirwan

FRONTISPIECE.



NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE.

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

LITERARY CABINET:

CONTAINING AN AMUSING ASSEMBLAGE OF

TALES, ANECDOTES, POETRY, BIOGRAPHY, EPIGRAMS,
ENIGMAS, ODDITIES, RECEIPTS, WONDERS OF NATURE
AND ART, THE SPIRIT OF THE PERIODICAL
PRESS, AND GLEANINGS FROM FOREIGN
JOURNALS; TOGETHER WITH
A COMPREHENSIVE

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE.

With Numerous Engravings.



VOL. I.

LONDON :
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY T. WALLIS, CAMDEN TOWN.
1823.

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HARVARD COLL OF LIBRARY
FROM
THE BEQUEST OF
EVERT JANSEN WENDELL
1918

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Preface.

TWELVE months since, when first we solicited the attention of the public to our undertaking, we experienced feelings of embarrassment which can be perfectly conceived only by those who have been placed in similar circumstances ; for we then had nothing to offer but promises, and nothing to exhibit in proof of our determination to perform them. On the present occasion we address ourselves to our readers with emotions of a very different nature : *then* we could only speak with diffidence of what we intended *to do*, but *now* we refer with confidence to what we have already *done*, as an earnest and guarantee that our future exertions will not be unsatisfactory to our subscribers, or disreputable to ourselves.

The patronage of the public having kept pace with our efforts to deserve it, we are encouraged to venture upon a slight extension of our plan, a course which many of our correspondents have repeatedly urged us to adopt ; we intend therefore to publish two numbers weekly (viz. on Wednesdays and Saturdays) during the winter-season, at the usual price ; but, as we have no wish to encroach too far upon the liberality of our readers, we shall print but one number weekly in the summer-season, when the taste for reading becomes comparatively feeble. By this arrangement we shall be enabled in some degree to prevent the accumulation of articles upon our hands, and to avoid that disagreeable ceremony of apologising to correspondents for the postponement of their

communications, which we have heretofore found too frequently necessary. The opportunity also which this plan will afford us of increasing the variety and value of our articles, need not be remarked upon.

As a matter of curiosity, we annex a list (in the order of their appearance) of the numerous publications of a nature similar to our own, which have sprung up in the course of the last twelve months, many of which have long since run their race, and sunk into oblivion. The enumeration we believe to be pretty complete, but many works of the class have been so short-lived, that a few of them may probably have escaped our notice: if so, we request some correspondent will supply the deficiency.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Hive | 19 Literary Expose |
| 2 Mirror | 20 Anti-Infdel |
| 3 Nic-Nac | 21 Vehicle of Genius |
| 4 Portfolio | 22 Daily Magazine |
| 5 Adventurer | 23 Universal ditto |
| 6 Gleaner | 24 Bonne Bouche |
| 7 Literary Humbug | 25 Antidote |
| 8 Gallant | 26 Medical Review |
| 9 Salmagundi | 27 Mechanic's Magazine |
| 10 Dry-Toast | 28 Sabbath |
| 11 Pulpit | 29 Literary Sketch-Book |
| 12 Family Magazine | 30 Saturday Night |
| 13 Christian Selector | 31 Sunday Morning |
| 14 Sabbath | 32 Weekly Magazine |
| 15 Cabinet of Curiosities | 33 Babblers and Entertainer |
| 16 Squib | 34 Freebooter |
| 17 Album of the Muses | 35 Register of Arts & Sciences |
| 18 Christian Gleaner | 36 Mechanic's Weekly Journal |

Innumerable editions of Novels, Travels, Plays, Poems, Newgate-Calendars, &c. &c. &c. in the same form, have also started into being, but these it would be tedious to enumerate; the number, however, of such publications, and the encouragement given to many of them, illustrate very strikingly the universal diffusion of education and intelligence among all classes of the community.

Fifty years ago a publisher would have found great difficulty in procuring patronage sufficient to support a single work of the kind.

It becomes us not to boast of our own achievements, but we may, without a suspicion of arrogance, be permitted to observe that the circumstance of our having firmly kept our ground amid the tempest of competition which has swept away so many of our rivals, sufficiently proves that the public set some value upon our exertions. Our best eulogy, we fancy, will be found in the following concise description of what we have performed—we have given upwards of 800 columns of amusing matter, illustrated by nearly fifty engravings, for the trifling sum of four shillings and sixpence. Till we find that any one of our competitors has done more for a smaller amount, we shall continue to claim for the **NIC-NAC** the character which we feel assured it deserves, of being “the cheapest of all the cheap works now in existence.” We look back upon the past with gratitude, and forward to the future with confidence and hope.

T. W.

29 Nov. 1823.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FRONTISPIECE.

A BRIEF account of Northumberland House may be found at p. 50 of this volume, but for the farther satisfaction of our readers, we subjoin some additional particulars.

The site of this mansion, which stands in a confined situation at the S. W. end of the Strand, was anciently occupied by the Hospital of St. Mary Rounceval, founded in the reign of Henry 3d, and suppressed in that of Henry 8th. The present magnificent building was commenced in the reign of James 1st, by Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, during whose lifetime it was called

Northampton House, and consisted of three sides only. After his death it came into the possession of his relation, the Earl of Suffolk, and was known by the name of Suffolk House till 1642, when Algernon, Earl of Northumberland, an ancestor of the present Duke, became proprietor of it, by marriage, and it obtained the name it still bears.

The house now forms a quadrangle, and towards the Strand is faced by a magnificent skreen-work (represented in our frontispiece), after a design by Inigo Jones, in a singular style of architecture, neither Gothic nor Grecian. In the centre is a grand arched gate, the piers of which are continued to the top of the building, where they unite, and form an arch, upon which stands a lion (the Northumberland crest) copied from the celebrated one by Michael Angelo. The centre of the front is stone, and the sides of brickwork, containing two rows of windows, over a like series of niches on the ground-story, with a tower at each extremity, surmounted by a dome and vane.

The interior of the house is magnificent, containing nearly two hundred apartments, with a splendid library, and many choice specimens of painting and sculpture; a particular description, however, would be foreign to our present purpose. Much damage was done to the building by an accidental fire in March 1780, but the parts consumed were soon restored; and the whole mansion, as well as the street-front, has lately been thoroughly renovated, under the inspection of the present Duke. After the alterations were completed, it was opened, with a grand dinner, on the 31st of May, 1823.

Second Edition.

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 1.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1822.

Vol. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.

THE CHIEF GLORY OF EVERY PEOPLE ARISES FROM ITS AUTHORS: so says Johnson; and, all men of judgment allow that periodical publications are productive of much good, by affording their readers an insight into Arts, Sciences, and Literature, without the labour of severe study:—a mode of imparting knowledge peculiarly adapted to people of business, who have not time to investigate elaborate or profound systems; and who, while they derive amusement from such works, reap also much instruction, for many are the topics, both of morality and learning, which are there discussed with truth, energy, and precision. Yet, how customary is it to see works of this description prefaced by a servile address, beseeching pardon of the Public for offering to its notice the said amusement and instruction. Such a procedure, however, ill accords with our notions of propriety, for we deem it to be extremely impertinent and useless. The Public, when it benefits by the exertions of a few individuals, is surely under the same obligations to them as a scholar is to his tutor, who imparts to him new and useful information, and will not be slow to acknowledge the favour; while, on the other hand, if the work is utterly worthless, the reader will scarcely be prevailed upon to overlook its defects, merely because they have been foretold at the outset. A book that contains useful and amusing matter, needs none of those cringing apologies for its appearance, which are made use of by tricksters to impose their spurious wares upon the Public. No! we would rather be honest and John-Bull like; use our best materials, manufacture them as well as we are able, and then await patiently, but confidently, the result of our undertaking. If it proves to be worthy of patronage, it

will assuredly receive it, notwithstanding we have omitted paying the usual homage to "the Lord knows who." Men of sense will applaud this plain-speaking; and as for those finical critics, who consider every address VULGAR that is not couched in terms of adulation, we fear their enmity no more than the governor of a fortress does battery by pistol-shot. Such self-constituted judges will growl and snarl like hungry curs, though, at the same time, they are replenishing their empty pericraniums with the fruits of other men's industry.

The English Traveller.

HINTS, RELATIVE TO ROADS & INNS. ROADS.

THERE were anciently but four roads throughout the kingdom, which were considered as the king's highways; all the rest, even to this time, have been made through the grounds of private persons. It is, therefore, very easy to conceive that it must have been a tremendous business for our forefathers to set out from Cumberland, with a determination to visit the Land's End, in Cornwall, and we cannot be surprised that men have, as we have been told, made their will previous to such perilous undertakings. Nevertheless, people always travelled, and transacted business at long distances, however inconvenient it might be; but even at the present period it is really little less than a contemplation of suicide to pass some roads, on which extravagant turnpike tolls are nevertheless exacted. The fault, therefore, rests with the commissioners of turnpikes; but public works, intended for public benefits, are too often converted into public abuses. Turnpike, if it implies any thing, implies safety. When it

was not clear which was a foot-way, a pack-way (implying both a horse-way and a foot-way), or a cart-way, which three distinctions of roads were formerly exclusively understood, men knew what they had to encounter, and accommodated themselves to one another's convenience as well as circumstances would admit; and if, on an emergency, travellers were obliged to pass through inlets to an open field, to avoid the confusion of clashing on a regular road, it was considered by law, even if the field were sown with corn, that such conduct was not a trespass. The right of what was called breaking the road, or obliging travellers to turn out of the way, was a very serious business. It was considered as a point of right, that all who were travelling to hamlets or villages, should give way to those who were going to cities, market towns, or other places of a superior description; but it would sometimes happen that the right of precedence was held in balance. Upon one of these occasions, a man is said to have taken out a newspaper, and begun to read it with great solemnity and deliberation, in continual hope, however, that the patience of his competitor would be tired out; but it so happened that the other had more of the stoic in him than had been apprehended; for, after he had very quiescently permitted the gazetteer to go through a considerable part of the paper, the snow at the same time lying on the ground, and a frosty air whistling about their ears, he said, with his muscles perfectly unbent, "Sir, when you have done with that paper I should take it as a favour if you would permit me to read it!" There was more good sense displayed by the traveller, who, finding himself in the same predicament, after having explained his pretensions, and enumerated the ancient privilege, to no purpose, cried out, "What, then, will you not break the road?" "No," answered the other, "I will not." "You will not! consider what you are about! you will not?" "No!" "Why, then, I will!"—(Continued on page 10.)

INNS.

On this subject I shall be so guarded, that those who accuse me of severity, must do so from a consciousness that my remarks are just, rather than from suspicion that I mean any thing personal or particular; which, though perhaps a wholesome and meritorious mode of castigation, in some cases (for all impostors deserve to be stigmatized), is unworthy any work that professes general utility; and I have often found that the cap has been sooner taken up when thrown among the multitude, than when addressed or attributed to any individual. Inns, both in England and Scotland, are of various descriptions; and Fielding's remark, that at good inns you pay extravagantly for good cheer, and at bad ones for nothing at all, may be justly applied in both kingdoms; and here I must take leave to contradict the common remark, that the inns in Scotland are much worse than those in England. I have been obliged to put up with inns in England, and head inns too, and in flourishing manufacturing towns, to which I would have preferred the worst of those into which chance has thrown me in Scotland. I will not say that there are many in either country too cleanly; but, taking into consideration that the money spent at the inns on great and fashionable roads in England is, by the multiplication of a large figure, more than can possibly be the case in Scotland, the accommodation and cheer preponderate in favour of Scotland; and as for civility, the Scotch are equal to the French, in point of attention, without any mixture of their insincerity, which certainly cannot be said at all times in favour of English innkeepers. I have been delighted with neatness and cleanliness at a lonely inn in a romantic country, between Dumfries and Sanquhar; and I have met with the manners of a man of fashion in a landlord at Greenock. This must not be considered as any disparagement to the elegance, and even magnificence, of some of the English inns, of which, perhaps, the Castle, at Marlborough, takes the lead, where the guest seems as if he were invited to occupy apart-

ments in the mansion of a man of fortune, with a request to accept the attendance of the servants during his stay, who have previously received orders to furnish him with whatever can contribute to his pleasure and convenience; and so far is Fielding's remark out of place, that I have never found the charges at houses of this description, taking into consideration the comforts I have experienced, so high as at inns in general. These are the sort of inns I would particularly recommend to families: at others they will seldom find much satisfaction, which they seem to be aware of, for those who travel in their own carriages rarely make any halt to dinner, but usually content themselves with what they call a snack. If they are obliged to stay all night, the best beds are generally engaged by officers, either already arrived or in expectation of arriving, an *avant courier* always previously attending upon such occasions, to mark the bed chamber doors with the names of those who are approaching. As to the supply of beef, mutton, and veal, and the rest of the bill of fare, it will be always "first come first served." If they are overstocked, the stalest meat is dressed first, and the cold fillet of veal, which has been set before a company at the Sunday's ordinary, or perhaps the farmers on a market-day, must be cut up to the very bone, to supply cutlets and Scotch collops. As to chickens, you will, most probably, get them stale, often lean and unhealthy, and sometimes killed after you enter the house. You may, perhaps, meet with a decent mutton chop, or a beef steak, but to do this you must manoeuvre. I had a trick of pretending to be a great eater, and always desired that the chops or steaks might be sent in "hot and hot;" thus, by picking here and there a bit, till the second supply arrived, I contrived to secure to myself that part of the meat which was least tainted or musty. You must be cautious how you order sea fish in an inland town; and there is a shameful custom, too often used, of keeping carp, eels, and other freshwater fish, in wells and cisterns, till

they are almost putrid, though alive.
—(Continued on page 11.)

Interesting Varieties.

OYSTERS.

[A short account of the nature, and manner of managing, Green, or, as they are commonly called, Colchester Oysters.]

IN May they cast their spawn, which the dredgers call spat. It is like a drop of candle grease, and about the bigness of a halfpenny. The spat cleaves to stones, old oyster shells, pieces of wood, and such like things, which are called cultch. It is conjectured that the spat, in twenty-four hours, begins to have a shell. In the same month the dredgers (by the law of the Admiralty court) have liberty to catch all manner of oysters, of what size soever. When they have taken them, with a knife they raise the small brood from the cultch, and then they throw the cultch in again to preserve the ground for the future, unless they be so newly spat that they cannot be safely severed from the cultch. In that case they are permitted to take the stone or shell that the spat is upon; one shell having some times twenty spats. After May it is felony to carry away the cultch, and punishable to take any oysters, unless it be those of size, that is to say, about the bigness of a half-crown piece, or, when the shells being shut, a fair shilling will rattle between them. The places where these oysters are chiefly caught, are called the Ponthurnham, Malden, and Colne Waters. The latter takes its name from the river Colne, which passes by Colchester, or Colchester, gives the name to that town, and runs into a creek of the sea, at a place called the Hythe, being the suburbs of the town. This brood, and other oysters, they carry to creeks of the sea, at Brickelsea, Mersea, Lago, Farin-grego, Wivenhoe, Tolesbury, and Salt-Coase, and there throw them into the channel, which they call their beds, or layers, where they grow

and fatten, and in two or three years the smallest brood will be oysters of the size aforesaid. Those oysters which they would have green, they put into pits, about three feet deep in the salt marshes, which have overflowed only at spring tides, to which they have sluices, and let out the salt water until it is a foot and a half deep. These pits, from some quality in the soil co-operating with the heat of the sun, will become green, and will communicate their colour to the oysters that are put into them, in four or five days, though they commonly let them continue there six weeks or two months, in which time they will be a dark green. As a proof that the sun operates in the greening, Tolesbury pits will green only in summer; but that the earth hath the greater power, Brickelsea pits green both winter and summer; and, for a further proof, a pit within a foot of a green pit, will not green; and those that did green very well, will in time lose their quality. The oysters, when the tide comes in, lie with their hollow shells downwards, and when it goes out, they turn on the other side. They remove not from their place, unless in cold weather, to cover themselves in the ouse. The reason of the comparative scarcity of oysters, and, consequently of their dearth, is because they have of late years been bought up by the Dutch. There are great penalties, by the Admiralty Court, laid upon those that fish out of those grounds that the Court appoints, or that destroy the cultch, or that take any oysters that are not of size, or that do not tread under their feet, or throw upon the shore, a fish which they call a five-finger, resembling a spur-rowell, because that fish gets into the oysters when they gape, and sucks them out. The reason why such a penalty is set upon any one that shall destroy the cultch, is, because they find that if that be taken away, the ouse will increase, and then muscles and cockles will breed there, and destroy the oysters, having nothing whereon to stick their spat. The oysters are sick after they have spat, but in June and July they begin to mend, and in August they are

perfectly well. The male oyster is black-sick, having a black substance in the fin. The female, white-sick (as they term it) having a milky substance in the fin. They are salt in the pits, salter in the layers, but salt-est at sea. Oyster-eating commences in London on the 12th of August, and the season lasts during all the succeeding months which have the letter R in their names.

METHOD OF PREPARING CHARCOAL AND CHALK FOR DRAWING.

The finest grained charcoal that can be procured, is sawed into slips of the size and form required, and put into a pipkin of melted bees' wax, where they are permitted to remain near a slow fire, for half an hour or more, in proportion to the thickness of the charcoal: they are then taken out, and when perfectly cool are fit for use. By adding a small quantity of resin to the wax, they may be made considerably harder; and, on the contrary, should they be required softer, a little butter or tallow will answer the purpose. The advantages these pencils possess are, that they can be made at the most trifling expense, and at any time; and that drawings made with them are as permanent as ink, and not liable to injury by being rubbed, or remaining in the damp. The above process will harden both red and black chalks, and make them permanent also.

AUTUMN.

A natural operation very characteristic of autumn, is the fall of leaves. They lose their vigour, change their colour, and are ultimately cast from the tree, while the buds in the immediate vicinity, as well as branches, remain in their fullest vigour. It must be observed, that this does not arise from a mere exhaustion of vital power, for when a branch has perished before casting its leaves, they are detached from it with difficulty; but where the vital energy continues to be exerted in the branch, the leaves either fall spontaneously, or by the slightest touch. The office of the leaves being fulfilled, their continuance would be

injurious to the plant,—a line of separation is soon marked out,—the leaves become, in relation to the plant, foreign bodies; and through the vital power of the vigorous and healthy branches, they are actually thrown off.

SOCRATES says, the shortest and surest way to live with honour in the world, is to be in reality what we would appear to be; and if we observe, we shall find that all human virtues increase and strengthen themselves by the practice and experience of them.

DR. BISS ON "LET US PRAY."—Let us not dream like the sluggard, not muse like the worldling, nor gaze about like the idle, nor talk like the impertinent, nor laugh like the insolent; but let us seriously mind what we are about: let us pray.

ANCIENT PUNISHMENTS.

In the reign of Edward IV. Thomas Bardett, Esq. was beheaded for wishing the horns of a stag in the king's belly; and William Walker, a publican, suffered also, for saying he would make his child heir to the crown,—meaning his house, which bore the sign of the Crown.

In the reign of Edward III. counterfeiting or debasing the coin of the realm, was made a capital offence, equal to that of violating any one of the royal females, or killing a chancellor, treasurer, or judge; but the laws of Russia oblige any person convicted of coining to swallow the base metal in a state of fusion!

Women, for coining and destroying their husbands, were formerly burnt alive, as was the case of Mary Norwood, for poisoning her husband, at Axbidge, in Ivelchester, May 8, 1765, pursuant to her sentence.—There being a great quantity of tar, and the wood on the pile being quite dry, the fire burnt with amazing fury; notwithstanding which, great part of her could plainly be perceived for near half an hour. Her shrieks pierced the very soul; and nothing could be more affecting than to behold, after her bowels fell out, the fire flowing between her ribs, and issuing out at her ears and mouth: in short, it was a sight so terrible, that great numbers turned

their backs and screamed out, not being able to witness so horrible a spectacle.

There was an act passed in the 5th year of the reign of Elizabeth, which made it felony without benefit of clergy to associate with gipsies, or Egyptians, for one month.

In August, 1735, at the assizes at Lewes, in Sussex, a man who persisted in not pleading, was carried back to Horsham gaol, to be pressed to death. They laid on him first 100 weight, and then added 100 more, but he still continued obstinate: they then added 100 more, and then made it 350 pounds, yet he would not speak. They then added 50 more, and he was just dead, having all the agonies of death upon him, when the executioner, who weighed about 16 or 17 stone, lay upon the board which was over him, and killed him instantly!

Robbing in a booth was considered a crime worthy of death, in the reign of Henry VIII.; and one Gratwell or Cartwell, hangman of London, and two others, were executed at the Wrestling Place, near Clerkenwell, for robbing a booth in Bartholemew Fair. The crime was confined to a tent or booth in a market or fair,

The Wit's Nunchion.

A PEDANT, a bald man, and a barber, being on a journey together, agreed that during the night each should watch in his turn four hours, while the other two slept. The lot for the first watch fell upon the barber: as soon as he saw that his companions were sound asleep, gently raising up the pedant, he shaved his head, and then awakened him. The pedant, roused from his slumber, yawned, scratched his head, and, finding a smooth crown, exclaimed,—“What a stupid dog is this barber, he has waked the bald man instead of me!”

COLONEL HORRY.—A ludicrous story is told of him, that, though varied in the narration, has its foundation in truth. Being once ordered to wait the approach of a British detachment in ambuscade, he performed

the service with such skill that he had them completely within his power, when, from a dreadful impediment in his speech, by which he was afflicted, he could not articulate the word "fire." In vain he made the attempt: it was fi, fi, fi, fi, but he could get no further. At length, irritated almost to madness, he exclaimed, "Shoot, d—n you, shoot! you know very well what I would say; shoot, shoot, be d—n'd to you, shoot!"

COLLEY CIBBER.—This player, who was often deficient in his part, from making too free with the bottle, was one evening sustaining a character in an old Roman tragedy; when he came to the passage, "I was then in Rome—," his memory failed him, and after several ineffectual attempts to recover the passage, and receiving no assistance from the prompter, he started aside, and seizing the fellow by the collar, fairly dragged him forward, and pinching his ear, exclaimed, "D—n you, you scoundrel, what was it I was doing in Rome? Why don't you tell me?" Need we add, that the tragedy became a farce.

ELEGANT COMPLIMENT.—Haydn, the musician, was an enthusiastic admirer of the late Mrs. Billington, our exquisite songstress; and one day, calling on Sir Joshua Reynolds, he found her sitting for her portrait to that celebrated painter: this was the famous picture of Sir Joshua's, in which Mrs. Billington is represented in the character of St. Cecilia, listening to the celestial music. Haydn having looked for some moments attentively at the portrait, said, "It is very like, a very fine likeness, but there is a strange mistake."—"What is that?" said Sir Joshua, hastily. Haydn answered, "You have painted her listening to the angels: you ought to have represented the angels listening to her!" Mrs. Billington was so much charmed by this compliment, that she sprang from her seat, threw her fair arms about Haydn's neck, and kissed him.

SHERIDAN.—As Mr. Sheridan was travelling to town in one of the pub-

lic coaches, for the purpose of canvassing Westminster, at the time when Mr. Paull was his opponent, he found himself in company with two Westminster electors. In the course of conversation, one of them asked the other to whom he meant to give his vote, when his friend replied, "To Paull certainly; for, though I think him but a shabby sort of a fellow, I would vote for any other rather than that rascal Sheridan!"—"Do you know Sheridan?" enquired the stranger. "Not I, sir," answered the gentleman, "nor do I wish to know him." The conversation dropped here; but when the party alighted to breakfast, Sheridan called aside the other gentleman and said, "Pray, who is that agreeable friend of yours? He is one of the pleasantest fellows I ever met with; and I should be glad to know his name."—"His name is Mr. T.; he is an eminent lawyer, and resides in Lincoln's Inn Fields." Breakfast over, the party resumed their seats in the coach; soon after which Sheridan turned the discourse to the law. "It is," said he, "a fine profession. Men may rise from it to the highest eminence in the state; and it gives vast scope to the display of talent: many of the most virtuous and noble characters recorded in our history have been lawyers. I am sorry, however, to add, that some of the greatest rascals have also been lawyers; but of all the rascals of lawyers I ever heard of, the greatest is one T. who lives in Lincoln's Inn Fields." The gentleman, fired at the charge, said very angrily, "I am Mr. T. sir."—"And I am Mr. Sheridan," was the reply. The jest was instantly seen; they shook hands, and instead of voting against the facetious orator, the lawyer exerted himself warmly to promote his election.

A SHOE, adorned with a handsome buckle, once found itself near a slipper, which it thus addressed: "My good friend, why don't you get a buckle like mine?"—"Your buckle is an excellent thing, truly," answered the slipper, "but I don't even un-

derstand its use."—"Its use," replied the shoe hastily—"you don't understand its use? Why, but for them we should stick into the first mud we went into."—"Yes, my dear friend," retorted the slipper, "but I never go into the mud."

BURKE was telling Garrick, one day at Hampton, that all bitter things were hot. "Aye," says Garrick, "what do you think, Mr. Burke, of bitter cold weather?"

• THE ROBBER.

A STORY, TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

AN Archbishop of Canterbury, making a tour into the country, stopped at an inn for refreshment. Being at the window, he observed at a distance, in a solitary wood, a well-dressed man alone, talking and acting a kind of part. The prelate's curiosity was excited to know what the stranger was about, and accordingly sent some of his servants to observe him, and hear what he was rehearsing; but bringing him back an answer that was not satisfactory, his grace resolved to go himself. He accordingly repaired alone to the wood, addressed the stranger very politely, and was answered with the same civility. A conversation having been once entered into, though not without interruptions by an occasional soliloquy, his grace asked what he was about. "I am at play," he replied. "At play!" said the prelate, "and with whom? You are all alone."—"I own," said he, "sir, you don't perceive my antagonist; but I am playing with God." "Playing with God!" (his lordship thinking the man out of his mind.) "This is a very extraordinary party: and pray what game, sir, are you playing?"—"At chess, sir." The Archbishop smiled, but the man seeming peaceable, he was willing to amuse himself with a few more questions. "And do you play for any thing, sir?"—"Certainly."—"And who wins?"—"Why, sir, at present the advantage is on my side; the game is just over; I have a fine

stroke; check mate, there it is." "And pray, sir, how much have you won?"—"Five hundred guineas." "That is a handsome sum, but how are you to be paid?"—"I pay and receive in the like manner; he always sends me some good rich man when I win, and you, my lord, are the person. The Archbishop had received a considerable sum that very day, the stranger knew it, and producing a pistol by way of receipt, the prelate found himself under the necessity of giving up his cash, and by this time discovered the inspired gamester to be neither more nor less than a thief.

HORRIBLE! HORRIBLE!!

SOME children at play in a new-mown field near Kensington-Gardens, horrid to relate, found the head of a female, with the skull split, the back part of it broken entirely off, and the nose cut away close to the face: the eyes were scooped out, and an iron spike was driven into the head; through the part where the neck had been amputated. To add to the horror of this occurrence, the head being extremely small, the children brought it, as a matter of curiosity to show their parents. With a view to the discovery of the perpetrators of this deed, the circumstances were withheld from the neighbours for a time, when, in a lane adjoining the same field, the headless trunk was found extremely mutilated, the arms and thighs having been cut off close to the body. The limbs could not be traced. A hue-and-cry was now raised throughout the vicinity, where horror only kept pace with anxiety for a full investigation of all the circumstances. The result proved to be that some person, not having the fear of mischief before his eyes, had thus treated—A WOODEN DOLL!

CURIOUS TRAIT OF CHARACTER IN A QUAKER.

"FRIEND JOHN,—I desire thee to be so kind as to go to one of those sinful men in the flesh, called an attorney, and let him take out an instru-

ment with a seal fixed thereunto, by virtue whereof we may seize the outer tabernacle of George Green, and bring him before the lamb's-skin men of Westminster, and teach him to do as he would be done unto; and so I rest thy friend in the light, G. L."

Domestic Auxiliary.

A POWDER TO TAKE OUT SPOTS.
—Burn the bones of sheep's feet, till they become white, beat them to fine powder, warm some of it, and lay it on the spot or stain till it begins to change colour, then take it away and apply more, till the spots be gone.

ANOTHER.—Take a piece of white bread hot from the oven, lay one piece above and the other underneath the silk, and it will draw out the oil or grease.

TO RECOVER THE COLOUR OF BLACK CLOTH WHEN DECAYED.—Take fig-tree leaves, boil them well in water, wash your cloth in it, dry it in the sun, and it will be a much fairer black.

TO PREVENT THE SMOKING OF LAMP OIL.—Steep your cotton in vinegar, dry it before you use it, and it will have the desired effect.

TO MAKE ICE IN SUMMER.—Take a large stone bottle that will hold three quarts, put in two ounces of refined salt-petre, half an ounce of Florence-orris, fill it up with boiling water, stop it close, and let it down into a well, leave it there two or three hours, then draw it up, break the bottle, and the ice will be found as hard and as good as that produced naturally.

CURE FOR MANGE IN DOGS.—Take large Mullet and sweet turnip roots, which boil in cow's water, till it is like a broth, with which rub the dog.

Poetry.

THE ELK DEER'S GRAVE.

The peasantry of the Alps are peculiarly attached to their deer, and often have them tame about their huts. The following lines are founded on an anecdote current among them, to which they attribute their original fondness for the animal:—

On Alpine heights there liv'd a maid,
As ancient stories tell,
Who far surpass'd each lowly maid
In Maldo's flow'ry dell;

And she had long a milk-white deer,
Her second self was he;
For where you saw the milk-white deer
There too wou'd Jetta be.

And oft with blooming flow'rets wild,
She did its shoulders deck,
And fasten'd wreaths of v'ilets mild
Adown its spotless neck.

One day it left the peaceful cell,
And far far off did roam:
Ah! had it staid it had been well,
And kept its peaceful home.

For Godabert, fam'd Maldo's lord,
Whose nod was e'en its law,
Was hunting in the leafy wood,
And there the elk deer saw.

With list'ning sound the hunter crept,
And as he stole along,
The white deer panting lay and wept,
The blackbird ceas'd its song.

Then Godabert the strong bow took,
And drew the bow string wide;
The arrow flew across the brook,
And pierc'd its victim's side.

The blood adown its lily neck
In crimson streams did flow;
Its heart, alas! at death's rude beck
Beat faint and deadly slow.

Then with a bounding start it flew,
Its mistress kind to greet;
And panting, its last breath it drew
At lovely Jetta's feet.

And by the greenwood as you roam,
Where wild shrub branches wave,
You see as well the elk deer's tomb,
As Jetta's flow'ry grave. I. F. W.

EPITAPH ON THOMAS RUN.

On, Run, your race is run at last,
Tho' from the bailiffs you run fast;
But when you run with father Death,
He soon did run you out of breath!

I. F. W.

GENUINE AFFECTION.

Those men, indeed, their loss of wives
May brook,
Where bodies only are from bodies
Took;
But, O! what reason can that grief control,
Where love is torn from love, and soul
From soul? GOLD.

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THE NIC-NAC:

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 2.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1822.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.

MR. NIC-NAC,—The present season has been remarkable on various accounts, but more particularly from the degree of mildness or warmth in the atmosphere at this advanced period of the year. It is not unlikely, however, that a change may soon take place, even during the time which will elapse from the date of this present writing till its important DEBUT in the pages of your miscellany; and once again the wintry winds may howl, and chilling frost render doubly dear the cheering delights of a warm fire-side and a tankard of ale. Then rheumatisms, colds, and chilblains, will resume their despotic sway, and "all the ills the flesh is heir to" be thus augmented by the periodical visitations of disease. I have, therefore, in anticipation of such an occurrence (which I venture to predict with an authority as much to be relied on as that of Francis Moore, physician), sent you the following extract from Valtrip's Observer in Poland, which may at least afford your readers the negative consolation of knowing that there are in this world others whose miseries exceed their own; and doubt not that you, Mr. Editor, while lucubrating in your snug arm-chair, busied with the glorious design of shining forth a bright planet in the galaxy of literature, in approbation of my humane attempt, will allow me, as an attendant satellite, a place in your orbit, where I may shed my pale and twinkling ray with a benign influence.

Yours, *

"In Poland, the winds, which prevail in the spring and in the autumn, concur, with the tenuity and uniform flatness of the soil, to render the summer short and the winter long. The winter terrifies by its rigour, and tires by its length. The horizon is a waste of snow during three months

in the year, and if it melts, another fall soon ensues. The cold sets in about the autumnal, and retires about a month or six weeks after the vernal equinox. Men and beasts often fall victims to its intensity. For three or four months in one winter, not a day passed without some beggars being frozen to death at Leopold, one of the most southern towns: and even travellers, who are covered with furs, and armed with every precaution against the cold, are often arrested on their way by the insuperable rigour of the frozen air, which induces over their frame the sleep of death. A person named Pruszyński was proceeding to Leopold on a sledge, drawn by six horses; in the vicinity of the town they missed their way; they called out to the postillion, but he was stiff upon his horse, and did not hear: the coachman still held the reins, but he had lost his senses and his life. The master appeared asleep, but he was frozen under his pelisse; in short, the whole party were either dead or on the verge of death. This unhappy fate principally happens to Jews, valets, and peasants, who are exposed, by the unfeeling brutality of their masters, to all the rigour of a frozen sky, while themselves, enveloped in the skins of bears, smoke their pipes at their ease round an enormous stove, where they courageously brave the winter's rage, and think not of the ills which they do not feel. In 1493, the Turks had memorable experience of the unsparing severity of the climate, for having pursued the Poles, whom they had beaten, into the centre of the country, the frost set in before they could retire, and destroyed more than the sword of the enemy. It is far from uncommon to meet with persons who have been deprived both of nose and ears by the fiend of frost. A young traveller

alighted on a very cold day at an inn where the author was, when taking out his handkerchief to wipe his nose, he pulled off the tip, like a piece of ice. The author says the company could with great difficulty prevent him from clapping a pistol to his head in a fit of despair, but they at last succeeded in persuading him that it was possible to be happy even without a nose."

Chs English Crabeller.

ROADS.

(Resumed from page 2.)

EVERY inconvenience of this description the turnpike road was to cure. I know that, before 1755, there was no symptom of any thing like a turnpike between Winchester and Southampton, and that when it came to be set about, the improvement was as efficacious as it was incredible. A few months completely altered the face of the country. It was the old ground young. Every thing wore a new aspect; and those chalky bottoms about Winchester, which had been at times impassable, and those slippery declivities, through which travellers climbed with so much difficulty over St. Giles's and Magdalen hills, in the way to Alresford, soon wore the appearance of a sober and gradual ascent, scarcely perceptible to the traveller. The traces of early recollection, should the objects be worthy attention, are strengthened rather than obliterated by time; a public benefit, therefore, of such magnitude, achieved as it were by magic, had a forcible effect on my youthful imagination; and, as far as my maturer judgment has given me capacity to notice, it has always occurred to me that no undertaking was ever prosecuted with more public spirit, or fraught with more public advantage. The canals are another object of great national consequence; and, though they do not properly come under observation here, I cannot refrain from noticing how nobly they conduce to our commercial opulence. Not a single reason can be given why the turnpike roads throughout the kingdom should not be safe and pleasant; large sums are lavished for the purpose; expense may be commanded adequate to

all emergencies; and this expense by law is levied on the public. Surveyors are required and enjoined to lay out all the monies collected, solely to repair the roads. Where a sufficient quantity of stone, gravel, chalk, or other materials cannot easily be obtained, they are commanded to contract for them; and if in this they have any private interest, they incur a penalty. They are obliged to furnish foot causeways; and, that the work may be properly accelerated, heaps of stones, rubbish, or other materials, are not to remain undispersed more than four days. Variety of other injunctions held out by this act, clearly shew that there cannot be a single excuse for neglect of this description, and no man in his senses will so far expose himself, as to offer a plea for such dishonesty and mismanagement. I am not to learn, nay, I am forward to allow, that spirited individuals go great lengths for public accommodation; but the money is subscribed; it gets into the hands of treasurers, and from thence takes so many collateral branches, that it is at length sifted like meal. By this means, abuses creep in, and what was intended in the beginning for a noble and useful undertaking, degenerates into a job. Turnpikes are farmed out and commuted for. These are the loop-holes through which all the corruption insinuates itself. I have many worthy reasons to love and respect the inhabitants of Devonshire; but I shall ever execrate the roads in that county, at least those in the north, which are shamefully neglected; the injustice of which conduct I shall make sufficiently manifest, by instancing, that those in Cornwall, with less capability, are more safe and pleasant. The practicability of rendering roads easy and convenient, that were originally difficult and dangerous, is clearly proved by a description of those in Scotland, which, though formerly rugged and inaccessible, have, by a laudable spirit and indefatigable perseverance, become, I should apprehend, the best in Europe; nor are those in Cumberland and Westmoreland far behind hand. Is it not a shame then, that in almost the centre of England, in a country marked by industry and

opulence, where natural impediments do not exist, where the breed of cattle is so largely encouraged, where every acre of ground smiles with plenty and fertility, in Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, that roads are to be met with which are a national disgrace? I cannot resist such an opportunity of instancing a most glaring confirmation of this fact. I had occasion to travel from Huntingdon to Leicester, and I was informed that I might go by Stilton, Stamford, Oakham, and Uppingham, or St. Neot's and Higham Ferrers, both of which I knew to be bad roads. I therefore chose that which passes through Thrapstone, Kettering, and Harborough, and which was represented to me as the best of the three. I found it, however, the most dangerous I ever attempted. The worst parts of those in Cornwall, where, from the nature of the materials, the sudden declivities, the unexpected moulderings of the rocks, the undermined masses of large roots, and other obstructions, which it requires the utmost industry to surmount, would, in point of safety, shame these roads, where no national impediments occur. This remark applies to a part of the road between Thrapstone and Kettering, and the whole of that between Kettering and Harborough; the neglect of which is the more scandalous, because the road from Huntingdon to Thrapstone, where the materials are exactly the same, is perfectly safe and pleasant. The danger from this abominable road is the prodigious depth of the ruts; and in the midst of your apprehensions you are called upon for a toll; and, though you are informed that the road will be worse as you get on, there is a pompous display of the only terms on which you are permitted to pass. Thus was I compelled either to risk my neck, or walk five miles (indeed, it was every where dangerous), over a road the caricature of ploughed ground, and all this to accommodate a set of men who undertake a public office, and neither fulfil the trust themselves nor suffer others to do it for them. As I passed through the gate, I told the woman, with an appearance of

gravity and earnestness, that I would certainly indict the road, to which she answered, with an air of perfect simplicity, "I wish to God you would, sir, and then I might stand a chance of saving up my rent."—(Concluded on page 18.)

I N N S.

(Resumed from page 3.)

AT Matlock I had trout brought before me completely tainted, though, with five minutes trouble, they might have procured them fresh out of the water. This circumstance so possessed me, that, when I dined at Boness, in Westmoreland, and was told that we might either have trout or char, I very roundly interrogated the woman as to their being fresh. "Fresh," said she, with great simplicity, "it's loikely, I dinna know; they binna caught yet." I don't know how I came to ask the question, for I always found representation and remonstrance of no other avail than to add insolence to imposition, and upon that account, I have since paid the bill without manifesting any objection, upon the principle of the man, who said he made a point of never affronting a highwayman or a barber, for one held a pistol to his head, and the other a razor to his throat. I never refused to pay a single item in a bill of this description but once. I have submitted to sit in filth, to wait till I have been sick, and at last to get nothing eatable at an inn at Fareham (the apology for an alehouse at Wapping), at the same expence for which I had the day before been lodged handsomely, attended diligently, and served plentifully, at the George, at Winchester. I have paid sixpence a mile for post horses more than the customary charge; and, indeed, I could mention a hundred more impositions of a similar complexion which I have quietly suffered. I know not, therefore, how I came to be moved to resistance in the instance I allude to; but I believe it was owing to the complexion of the bill, which I had, as I run my eye over it, remarked in every circumstance to have been most shamefully overrated. The article I mean was

this: I had arrived at this inn, and I dined there; my family was invited with me to the house of a particular friend, whither we went after dinner, which was about three hours after I arrived, without intention, indeed, of sleeping there, lest it should prove more inconvenient than I wished. It was impossible, however, to resist their solicitations, and a servant was sent to inform the people of the inn that we should not want beds. Seeing the next morning in the bill, not only a charge for beds, but for rush-lights, my usual prudence, if it may be called so, forsook me, and I resolutely refused to pay the unreasonable demand. A most particular friend, to whom I afterwards related the circumstance, told me he had one to match it. Six gentlemen, upon a public occasion, ordered a dinner at the very house in question; and after they had paid the bill, threw down a shilling a-piece for the waiter. The fellow took up the amount of the bill, and asked what the remainder of the money was for. He was told it was for himself. "For me," said he, "I'll send boots for it." At this insolence one of the gentlemen swore he would kick him out of the room. "No, no," said my friend, "that would give you trouble, and put you to expence; I'll tell you how to save both: imitate me; put your shilling into your pocket." Which advice was adopted. It is not unusual for the bill to be cast up wrong. This error I always make a point of rectifying, because, as it is possible to be a mistake, one may take the liberty of noticing it without offence.—(Continued on page 19.)

Interesting Varieties.

BREAD.

BREAD is often spoiled to please the eye. The artificially whitened, drying, and stuffing bread, though made of the heart of the wheat, is in reality the worst of any: yet this is the bread which most people prefer, and the poorer sort will eat no other. All the different kinds of grain are occa-

sionally made into bread, some giving the preference to one and some to another, according to early custom and prejudice. The people of South Britain generally prefer bread made of the finest wheat flour, while those of the northern countries eat a mixture of flour and oatmeal, or rye-meal, and many give the preference to bread made of oatmeal alone. The common people of Scotland also eat a mixed bread, but more frequently bread of oatmeal only. In Germany the common bread is made of rye, and the American labourer thinks no bread so strengthening as that which is made of Indian corn; nor do I much doubt but the Laplander thinks his bread made of the bones of fish is the best of any. Bread made of different kinds of grain is more wholesome than that made of one only, as their qualities serve to correct one another. For example, wheat-flour, especially the finer kind, being of a starchy nature, is apt to occasion constipation. Bread made of rye-meal, on the other hand, proves often too slippery for the bowels. A due proportion of these makes the best bread. For the more active and laborious I would recommend a mixture of rye with the stronger grains, as peas, beans, barley, oats, Indian corn, &c. These may be blended in many different ways: they make a hearty bread for a labouring man, and, to use his own language, they lie longer on his stomach than bread made of wheat-flour only. Barley bread passes too quickly through the alimentary canal to afford time for conveying the proper nourishment; but bread made of barley mixed with peas is very nourishing. When potatoes, or boiled grain, are used, bread ceases to be a necessary article of diet. During the late scarcity of bread, I made it a rule not to eat above one half the quantity I used to do, and I found no inconvenience whatever from the change. Nay, some told me, that for a considerable time they had left off the use of bread altogether, without experiencing any change in the state of their health. A great part of the bread consumed in this country is by children. It is always ready.

and when the child calls for food, a piece of bread is put into its hand, to save the trouble of dressing any other kind of victuals. Of many children this is the principal food, but it is far from being the most proper. Children are often troubled with acidities of the stomach and bowels; and it is well known that bread mixed with water, and kept in a degree of heat equal to that of the human stomach, soon turns sour. During the late scarcity, many of the labouring men, and even artificers, could not earn as much money as was sufficient to keep their families in the article of bread only. It is certain, however, that on a different plan, such families might have lived very comfortably. Many of the articles of diet are cheaper than bread, and equally wholesome. Above one half of the expence of living might be saved, by a due selection of the articles of diet. The English labourer lives chiefly on bread, which being accompanied with other dry, and often salt food, fires his blood, and excites an unquenchable thirst, so that his perpetual cry is for drink. But the greatest consumption of bread is occasioned by tea. It is said that the subjects of Great Britain consume a greater quantity of that herb, than the whole inhabitants of all the other nations of this quarter of the globe. The lowest woman in England must have her tea, and the children generally share it with her. As tea contains no nourishment, either for young or old, there must of course be bread and butter to eat along with it. The quartern loaf will not go far among a family of hungry children, and if we add the cost of tea, sugar, butter, and milk, the expence of one meal will be more than would be sufficient to fill their bellies with wholesome food three times a day. There is reason to believe that one half the bread consumed in England is used to tea, without one hearty meal ever made of it. The higher ranks use tea as a luxury, while the lower orders make a diet of it. I had lately occasion to see a striking instance of this in a family, that was represented to me as in distress for want of bread. I sent them a little money,

and was informed that they ran with it directly to the tea-shop. To a heavy, sluggish, phlegmatic man, a moderate use of tea may not prove pernicious; but where there is a debilitated stomach and an irritability of fibre, it never fails to do much hurt. With many it has the effect to prevent sleep. Tea will induce a total change of constitution in the people of this country. Indeed, it has gone a great way towards effecting that evil already. A debility, and consequent irritability of fibre, are become so common, that not only women, but even men, are affected with them. That class of diseases, which, for want of a better name, we call nervous, has made almost a complete conquest of the one sex, and is making hasty strides towards vanquishing the other. Did women know the train of diseases induced by debility, and how disagreeable these diseases render them to the other sex, they would shun tea as the most deadly poison. No man can love a woman eaten up with vapours, or washed down with diseases arising from relaxation. It is not tea taken as a beverage after a full meal, or in a crowded assembly, that I so much condemn, though I think something as elegant and less pernicious might be substituted in its place. The mischief occasioned by tea arises chiefly from its being substituted for solid food. This is so much the case at present, that, had I time to spare, I think it could not be better employed than in writing against this destructive drug.

POTATOE BRANDY.—Brandy has for some years past been largely distilled from potatoe-berries in Lorraine and Champagne: these berries produce on fermentation as much spirit as the grapes of Lorraine; but the specific gravity of the former is only as one to nine or ten.

MIXTURE OF SUBJECTS.—Religion, law, liberty, and Parliaments, are words of precious esteem, when they are not carried from their just signification.

When you ask advice of a friend in

a matter of moment, you should at the same time communicate your own conceptions.

THE LONDON MERMAID.

As the London Mermaid continues to create the greatest curiosity in the minds of thousands, some of them strenuously affirming the existence of such creatures, and others regarding them as impossible productions of nature, maintaining at the same time that the one which is now exhibiting to the tune of three or four hundred shillings per day, is nothing more than the members of various animals ingeniously put together,—we have gathered a few assertions from professional men upon the subject, leaving our readers to form what opinion they please.

It is related in the *Histoire d'Angleterre*, part 1, page 403, that in the year 1187, a Merman was "fished up" in the county of Suffolk, and kept by the governor for six months; it was exactly like a man in every respect, and wanted nothing but speech. He never could be brought to any understanding of his nature and situation, and at length made his escape, and was seen to plunge into the sea, from whence he returned no more.—In 1430, in the great tempests which destroyed the dykes in Holland, some women at Edam, in West-Friesland, saw a Mermaid, which had been driven by the waters into the meadows which were overflowed. They took it (and it is said) dressed it in female attire, and taught it to spin. It fed on cooked meat, but all efforts to teach it to speak proved ineffectual, though Parival says, "it had some notion of a deity, and made its reverences very devoutly when it passed a crucifix." It was taken to Haerlem, where it lived some years, but it ever retained an inclination for the water. At its death it was allowed christian burial. In 1560, on the coast of Ceylon, some fishermen caught, at one draught of their nets, seven Mermen and Mermaids. They were dissected, and found to be made exactly like human beings. For a full account of this last circumstance,

see the *Histoire de la Campagne de Jesus*, part 2d. l. 4. No. 276.—Georgius Trapanzantius declares that he himself saw a Mermaid, extremely beautiful, rise many times above water; he adds, that in Apirus, a Merman came on the shore, and watched near a spring of water, endeavouring to catch young women that came there; he was caught, but could not be made to eat.

The celebrated Peter Camper of Amsterdam, who died in 1789, denied the existence of mermaids, tritons, dragons, centaurs, sphinxes, and several other creatures, which appear in such splendid clothing in our heraldic figurations. Writing on fish, &c. he observes:—"The natural history of the frog affords us a curious and striking example of the changes appointed by the wise Creator, in conformity to exigencies of the animal. The frog is provided with a tail, as long as it is destitute of feet, but when these protrude and have acquired sufficient force, the tail gradually contracts until it totally disappears. This singular phenomenon might be contemplated every Spring, were not the animal too common, and deemed too insignificant to attract our notice. Fish are destitute of necks, not merely because they have not feet, but because they can procure their food without them. Snakes are also without them, and in this respect are in their forms very similar to fish. A shark has long teeth, but is destitute of a snout, which would be useless, as it seeks and devours its food while swimming in the water. Many are the instances of the necessity of a snout in some animals, and its uselessness in others; and Nature has wisely made their forms correspond. The neck is as long as the feet in those animals which gather their food from the earth. Since fish are naturally in equipoise with the water, and they all swim or row themselves forwards by means of the tail, it follows, that their position in the water must be horizontal. The centre of motion will vary according to the weight of the head, and upon this circumstance

will depend the length of the tail. Since greater diversity of form can take place in fish than in quadrupeds, there is a space for a much greater diversity of SPAINS in the first than in the last. The existence of such sea-monsters as tritons and mermaids is impossible, and the idea of them absurd, as these animals must be supposed to swim in an erect position, the tail forming an acute angle with the back; whereas the centre of gravity would universally force them into a right line."

We shall conclude this article with the following unanswerable decision, as to the real or imaginary existence of mermaids:—A party of gentlemen at the Bush tavern, Bristol, conversing on the subject, and one expressing his doubts as to their reality, another exclaimed, "Oh! real beyond all doubt. I have seen seven or more at one time, the most beautiful creatures I ever beheld, with long black hair, and their young ones sucking at their breasts!" The worthy and facetious host of the tavern, replied, "Sir, a captain informed me, that one Sunday morning a MERMAN suddenly appeared to his men, dressed in gay attire, with his hair frizzled, and powdered as white as a full-grown cauliflower, and demanded to know if the captain was on board. The captain soon appeared on deck, when the merman addressed him as follows:—"Sir, I shall feel particularly obliged by your giving orders for your anchor to be taken up, as it lies against my street door, and prevents my family from going to church!"

CROSS READINGS,

FROM WALTER SCOTT'S KENILWORTH.
When the Countess of Leicester arrived—before Wayland's horse's nose—spiked with steel—dressed up with vizards and buskins—the pavement flashed fire—She raised her hand—of that huge lumpish and heavy cast—and dashing it on the ground—whispered—"I know where the shoe pinches."—and skipping up to the porter, plucked him by the tail—about one hundred and thirty

yards in length, and ten in breadth—and caught up Dickie Sludge—and put him into—short breeches.

The Earl of Leicester—started up, scratching his huge head—with the same care that a careful housewife uses in replacing a cracked china cup upon her mantle-piece—cocked his beaver, threw out his leg, and—exclaimed—"I am no dog to go at every man's whistle,"—by G—

ANAGRAMS.

SIR,—If the following anagrams are deemed worthy a place in your weekly miscellany, they are at your service. If not very interesting, they will, at least, show the possibility of such transpositions, as render the letters of one or more words capable of forming other words, without adding or diminishing. The first one, which forms the title of your work, I have, with some difficulty, converted into other words; the rest I have selected.

"The Nic-Nac, or Oracle of Knowledge."—Declare no wrong! I teach one flock!

"Universal Suffrage."—Guess a fearful ruin!

"Revolution."—Love to ruin!

"Lawyers."—Sly ware!

"Catalogues."—Got as a clue.

CE.

The Wit's Nunchian.

Mr. LOVE.—When Mr. Love appeared at Drury-lane in the character of Falstaff, being a man of some vanity, he used to puff constantly in the newspapers, upon his excellency in the part; all which, however, availed but little, as he never could bring a full house. One Bignell, sitting with a few of the players at the Black Lion, had filled a pipe, the funnel of which was stopped, and after several attempts to light it, he threw it down in a passion, saying, "Egad, gentlemen, I am like your new Falstaff; I have been puffing and puffing, this long while past, but all to no purpose, for I am not able to draw."

FREDERICK THE GREAT was so fond of children, that the young princes, his nephews, had always access

cess to him. One day, writing in his cabinet, where the eldest of them was playing with a ball, it happened to fall on the table; the king threw it on the floor, and wrote on; presently after the ball again fell on the table; he threw it away once more, and cast a serious look on the young child, who promised to be more careful, and continued his play. At last the ball, unfortunately, fell on the very paper on which the king was writing, who being a little out of humour, put the ball in his pocket. The little prince humbly begged pardon, and entreated to have his ball again, which was refused. He continued some time praying for it in a very piteous manner, but all in vain. At last, grown tired of asking, he placed himself before his majesty, put his little hand to his side, and said with a menacing look and tone, "Do you choose, sire, to restore the ball or not?" The king smiled, took the ball from his pocket, and gave it to the prince with these words, "Thou art a brave fellow; Silexia will never be retaken whilst thou art alive!"

BEGINNING OF THE WEEK.—When Oliver Cromwell lay with his army at Perth, a rich old miser of that town, named Monday, hung himself one Lord's day, on account of the fall of grain. Oliver offered a premium for the best epithet on old Hunks. Several were accordingly sent him, but he was pleased with none. At last a poor cobbler sent him the following, which was approved, and the author received the reward:

Blessed be the Sabbath day,
And curs'd be worldly peif;
Tuesday must begin the week,
For MONDAY'S hang'd himself.

A Scotchman having read this curious production, and perceiving that the cobbler supposed Monday was the first day of the week, wrote the following:—

What country cam the cobbler fra,
That Monday 'gan the week wha wot?

Nor Jew nor Christian could he be—
Forsooth he was a Hotentot.

SINGULAR ELEVATION IN LIFE.—During the troubles in the reign of Charles I. a country girl came to London in search of a place, but not succeeding, she applied to be allowed to carry beer from a brew-house; those women were called tub-women. The brewer observing her to be a very good-looking girl, took her out of this low situation into his house, and afterwards married her; he died, however, while she was yet a very young woman, and left her a large fortune. She was recommended on giving up the brewery, to Mr. Hyde, a most able lawyer, to settle her husband's affairs; he, in process of time, married the widow, and was made Earl of Clarendon. Of this marriage there was a daughter, who was afterwards wife of James II. and mother of Mary and Anne, queens of England.

UNIVERSAL DEVOTION.

GOLD governs all without pretence,
And would be GOD, but L prevents.

MATRIMONY.

CRIES Sue to Will, 'midst matrimonial strife,
"Curs'd be the hour I first became your wife."
"By all the powers," said Will, "but that's too bad,
You've curs'd the only civil hour we've had."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are surprised that master critic B. does not assert more of our book to be nonsense than the Shoe and Slipper. What pity 'tis that assumption of CON-CERT should meet rebuke!

K's remarks on "Horrible! Horrible!" may be just. But he, as well as B., is requested to understand that we begin this work as Lord Chesterfield began the world—not with a bare desire, but with an insatiable thirst, a rage for popularity, applause, admiration; if this should make us do some silly things on one hand, on the other hand it MAY make us do almost all the right things we MAY DO.

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. III. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1822. PRICE 1d.

"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.

THE FORTUNATE DISCOVERY.

AN ORIGINAL TALE.

NIGHT was fast spreading its sombre shades around the varied landscape, accompanied by a drizzling shower, which had been for some time gathering in the clouded atmosphere, and obliged Sir Joseph to seek shelter beneath the rusticated cottage of some elderly peasants, situate at a short distance from the town of Caergybi,* in North Wales, popular from its contiguity and the easy access it afforded (by means of small packets used solely for that purpose) to travellers of a speedy conveyance to Dublin, from whence Sir Joseph Phillipps had just embarked on his way to London, where he intended to settle, and in the exercise of benevolence to chase from memory the untoward events which had befallen him in the former part of his life.

Sir Joseph had, at an early age, selected to himself a partner from the brilliant circle of fashion, hoping with her to steer down the unruffled stream of life, and, like a skilful pilot, clear his fancy-decked bark from all dangers. But scarce had he launched forth on the deep waters of prosperity, ere the sun of adversity closed on him for ever. A ruthless villain, envying his happiness, had carried off his heart's prized treasure—his lovely wife.

Long and fruitless were the searches he made for her. When unable longer to remain in a place which daily reminded him of the irreparable loss he had sustained, he converted the whole of his immense property into specie, which he lodged in the hands of his bankers, and immediately departed for the continent, where he remained five years; from thence he removed to Ireland, and continued

there seven years, when, after an absence of twelve years, he came to the determination of again visiting his native land.

He accordingly once more embarked on the briny deep, and in a few hours safely reached Caergybi, when his admiration of the romantic and picturesque views it afforded, induced him to make this interesting spot his abode for a few weeks.

Daily did this worthy baronet perambulate some of its most admired and beautiful walks, frequently finding means for the exercise of his benevolence.

It was in one of these excursions, wherein Sir Joseph had far exceeded the usual distance of his walks, that he found himself necessitated to tap at the cottage door of the peasant Morgan; nor did he remain long in suspense, ere he was bid an hospitable welcome by his kind host, who "hoped his honor wouldn't feel any bad effects from the wet."

"Fear me not, mine host," he replied, smiling at the honest zeal of the rustic cottager. "But, mine host," he continued, after a pause, "have you no refreshments at hand of which I can partake? I must confess the cravings of an hungered appetite I begin must acutely to feel."

"Why, your honor," exclaimed Morgan, "dame has just gone to farmer Davis's to fetch some new milk and a bit of white bread; we have a few fresh eggs in the house, for I thought your honor would like to take some little refreshment."

"But, friend," added Sir Joseph, "what occasion was there to give the good dame so much trouble? Brown bread would have supplied the place of white, and a draft from a pure spring would have sufficiently answered the purpose of new milk."

At this moment the good dame

D

* Holyhead.

made her appearance, bearing in her hand a basket covered with a clean white cloth.

"My good woman," said Sir Joseph, "you have given yourself a deal of unnecessary trouble."—Continued on page 27.)

The English Traveller.

ROADS.

I pique myself on being moderate in my remarks on public conduct, but in the present case were I even so inclined, it is impossible to exaggerate. The day on which I was coaxed into this curious dilemma was very fine, the roads were perfectly dry, and nothing but dishonest neglect could possibly impede their being not only passable, but sound and safe. I will be candid enough to allow, that the great roads are not liable to all these objections, though I insist, that many of the duties I have mentioned are too frequently violated even as to them; but, if they were not, that a proportionable degree of inconvenience may not be wanted, we annoy each other. Vainly may turnpike trustees and commissioners be looked upon as kings of the roads, while drivers of flying waggons and crazy dung carts arrogate a right to be viceroys over them. The latter, in particular, are a most scandalous annoyance. Their duty is to be at the heads of their horses, and they incur a penalty, even though there be no chance of an accident, for deviating from that station. Are they ever in that situation? Not once out of ten times. As they generally return from market half drunk, they teach their horses to walk exactly in the middle of the road, that they themselves may sleep in safety. Thus, unless the road should happen to be so wide that three carriages may easily pass a-breast, every person who comes by in a carriage incurs some risk. Should he be disposed to dispute the pass, after enduring a comfortable portion of blackguard and indecent abuse (especially if there should happen to be ladies), he is perhaps permitted to proceed; and, if this should

happen without the loss of a wheel, or some such disaster, he may consider himself very fortunate. Infinite mischief would happen in the course of every day, especially within a few miles of London, were it not for the temper and dexterity of gentlemen's coachmen, who find it useless to contend with such wretches. There is one species of monkey-like wantonness practised which I defy any man to account for. I mean defacing direction posts and mile-stones. I took notice that in a given distance of a hundred and fifteen miles, I found only eleven mile-stones on which the inscriptions were legible. It is very easy to conceive that a man may be wrought to defraud the public, or individuals to appease his hunger, or indeed any other appetite, but, as all kinds of vice generally originate in indolence, it is particularly curious that human beings should take pains almost equal to industry to destroy what had been established by general consent for general convenience. I cannot see which way it can be a satisfaction, or to whom an advantage—not even to mile-stone makers, otherwise one might conceive it to be connived at upon the same principle that tallow-chandlers insist upon illuminations, and glaziers break windows upon a rejoicing night. However, to facilitate the satisfaction and accommodation of the traveller, the press is continually issuing information. Itinéraires and road books are constantly published; but even from them the reader must not expect any thing like accurate distance. It has not been ascertained at all points by any body. One man measures from the stones' end, and another from the general post-office, and always correctly. What then? Scarcely shall those surveyors return home but some new cut across the country shall be thought expedient, and all their calculations are deranged. If the roads were to be surveyed four times a year, the returns could not be every where accurate. This, however, is no where a reproach, for all alterations of this description are amendments.—(End of Roads.—Begun on page 2.)

C. D.

INNS.

INNS are kept by different descriptions of persons, among whom I am ready to allow that there are a number of very respectable characters. I could point out men in this situation, who have rendered themselves and their families independent, and who are held in esteem, and that very justly, by gentlemen of the first respectability and consequence in their different neighbourhoods. You are, in such cases, as comfortable as if you were at home, except in those respects which cannot but be incident to all such situations. The best symptom of this style of inn-keepers is a gradual rise by the fruits of industry and rectitude; just as we have seen men in the city, who have grown into the highest opulence from salaries of forty pounds a year; and just as we saw Lord Hawke an admiral. Professions never debase men, it is men debase themselves. Landlords of this description, by uniting the occupations of farmer, wine-merchant, and other lucrative and analogous pursuits to the business of vintner, are enabled to treat their guests in a much more eligible manner than those who have nothing but the common profits to exist on, and therefore are obliged to live precariously, and compelled to go to market how and where they can for that which those of the other description possess of their own, and have always within their reach. The other inn-keepers smack of their former occupations. They have been perhaps waiters, who, by industriously accumulating their perquisites, not forgetting the sixpences and ninepences, have amassed at length enough to succeed their masters, people of the same stamp, who from indolence and infirmity, occasioned by hard drinking, find in themselves an inclination to retire; and as a landlord would be like an empty butt without a landlady, the waiter marries the chambermaid, who, by tucking up young couples and warming beds, has grown wavin both in pocket and inclination her-self; and thus, that every thing may take its regular course, she appoints her favorite in her stead, for a valuable consideration by the bye,

and leaves the bason and the bottle to bring on the first dish. Another set have been gentlemen's servants; who, by having flattered the foibles and vices of their masters and mistresses, intermarry either the butler with the housekeeper, or the gentleman's own man with the lady's own maid, and buy the good-will of some inn, over which those masters and mistresses have an influence. Nothing is so easy as to know the symptoms by which you may pronounce yourself in one of these houses; for second-hand ideas in such people are inherent, and every thing is slatternly and uncomfortable. There are many more descriptions, which it would be tedious to enumerate. It is impossible, however, to omit a just and necessary reprobation of those scandalous and unwarrantable liberties which are permitted to servants, who (and I go by an averaged calculation of three years) receive a third of their masters' whole charge; yet are they frequently discontented. A string of them intercept you in the way to your carriage, and perhaps the more you go to the outside of right, the less they appear contented, and all this in the face of their masters and mistresses, who dare not interfere, for their department extends no farther than the bar; the waiter, the ostler, and the chambermaid, having purchased their places, and are therefore determined to espouse the cause of all their fellow servants, even to honest boots. It is from this arises more than half the impositions of inns, just as the best laws lose their efficacy by being strained and filtrated through the hands of understrappers.—(Continued on page 26.)

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NIC-NAC.

SIR,—I have been much amused by your first number, which I met with yesterday and perused while stowing away a glass of grog, "my custom always in the afternoon." It has but one fault: 'tis TOO CHEAP. However, its extensive circulation may compensate for its extremely low price. If you will allow me, I intend to become one of your contributors;

and as I have nothing better to offer at present, I send you some addition to your article on

ANCIENT PUNISHMENT.

THE custom of pressing contumacious criminals to death, originated with the Normans, who styled it the *PEINE FORTE ET DURE*. By an act passed in 1772, it was abolished; and at present, when a prisoner refuses to plead, he is either at once deemed guilty, or the trial proceeds. The man mentioned by you was probably one of the last who underwent this species of torture. In the old *Newgate Calendar*, vol. I, p. 277, there is a curious cut, representing the infliction of it upon one W. Spiggott, who held out till 350 pounds were placed upon him, and then consented to plead. He was hung at Tyburn, for a highway robbery, in February, 1721.

Few narratives are more harrowing to the feelings of humanity, than that of the torments inflicted upon certain conspirators at Lisbon, in the last century, the particulars of which I subjoin, with a brief notice of the preceding occurrences:—About ten at night, on the 3d of September, 1758, as the king of Portugal was returning in his carriage to the palace at Belem, accompanied by a nobleman, several shots were fired at him from behind a hedge, which dangerously wounded him; his companion also was hurt, and the coachman killed on the spot. The assailants, favoured by the darkness, got clear off, and suspicion attached to no one in particular.

Upon the king's recovery, the English at Lisbon, as a testimony of joy, gave a ball, at which most of the Portuguese nobility were present, and amongst the rest the duke d'Aveiro, his duchess, and son. About one in the morning, when the company were upon the point of separating, they found the avenues filled with troops; and no one was suffered to depart till the duke, with his wife and son, and several of their relatives, had been arrested and lodged in prison, for being concerned in the conspiracy.

The enmity of this family towards

the king was caused by his treatment of the duke's uncle, whom he had banished, but their guilt was discovered by mere accident. The duke, who personally aided in the attack, having as he supposed accomplished his purpose, fled, in company with two bravos, his companions, to the house of one of these ruffians, where they had been accustomed to meet. The man's wife, who was ignorant of the undertaking, having her brother with her, hastily thrust him into a closet, upon seeing the duke approach, in which situation he overheard the secret, and some time after revealed it to the state. The conspirators were immediately arrested, and the principals, after being repeatedly tortured, were put to death in a barbarous manner. They were the duke d'Aveiro, the marquis and marchioness de Tavora, with their two sons, the count d'Atouguia, two of the duke d'Aveiro's stewards, and one of the bravos who assisted him in the attack, the other having found means to elude the vigilance of justice. The particulars of the execution (which took place on the 13th of January, 1759) I have transcribed from the *British Chronicle* of Feb. 9, in that year:—

“At Belem, on the Quay, just over against the royal palace, was a stage erected, about twice as high as a man, with stairs on one side to ascend. Here stood the instruments of death, and several forms which were fastened to the ground, each having a large piece of sail cloth lying near it. There might be about 70,000 spectators: the scaffold was surrounded both by horse and foot, all with their bayonets fixed, and just as the clock struck nine the tragedy began.

“The marchioness de Tavora was the first who suffered, and was brought to the place of execution in a covered waggon. She was reported to have lost her senses. Her arms were tied down with a rope; she was a very tall woman, about fifty years of age. When she ascended the scaffold, there was a horrid shout from the populace; and at the same time the executioner placed a stool in the front for her to sit down on; instead of which she im-

mediately fell on her knees, and continued bowing her body backward and forward, for about five minutes, in great disorder. She had a kind of white hood on her head, very much soiled, a black mantle over her shoulders, and her gown was of a reddish colour. The executioner made a signal to the two men who guarded her; upon which they took her up, and placed her on the stool, seemingly with some difficulty. Here she was tied, and her hood and mantle being taken off, the executioner laying hold of her hair, with one blow of a large back-sword, almost cut off her head: I say ALMOST, for it hung upon her breast, and afterwards fell from thence into her lap! Now there was another loud shout, and the body was taken up, laid upon one of the forms, and covered with a sail cloth.

"Then came Joseph Maria, her son, a lad of about sixteen years of age, a beautiful youth. They stript him to his shirt and breeches immediately; and being tied to the wheel, or rather cross, the first executioner put a rope of cat-gut about his neck, and strangled him. When this was near done, the other executioner broke him, and his body was laid and covered like his mother's.

"The count d'Attougnia had been in a fever some days, and when he appeared with the young marquis de Tavora, a very handsome well-made man, he was not able to stand up. They were both served in the same manner as Joseph Maria. The young marquis behaved with great intrepidity, but the duke's servants, who afterwards suffered, behaved in a frantic manner, struggling (though they were all strangled before they were broke) with the officers, and making a great noise.

"The old marquis Tavora was broke on the wheel alive. He had received the rack so often, that he was hardly able to get up the stairs. He came to the place of execution in an open cart, with the duke d'Aveiro, who remained in it, at the foot of the scaffold, while the other was dispatched before his eyes! After they had

taken the ropes from his arms, and the irons from his legs, in order to fix him to the wheel, he went towards the sail cloths, and lifted them up every one; but when he came to his younger son's body, he kneeled down, kissed the corpse, and wept aloud! he then spoke something to the executioner, and took hold of the iron crow with which he was to be broke. The executioner seemed to shew him some respect. He was then tied to the engine, and they broke his right arm, upon which a herald proclaimed his crime. His shrieks would have pierced the hardest heart; nor did they cease till he got the coup de grace, as they call it; and although he received but three blows alive, I believe he might be near a quarter of an hour under the executioner's hands.

"Then mounted the duke, who was treated worse than any of them. His hands were instantly chopped off, under a supposition that he had fired one of the blunderbusses at the king: then he was tied to the wheel, where he languished an hour and a quarter, receiving eight strokes. In about half an hour his face became totally black, and his screams at every brake were enough to frighten one. With the last stroke they broke his belly, and his bowels came out! then he was laid aside like the rest.

"Upon this two men came on the stage with tools, and fixed up a couple of stakes with pitched seats, and a quantity of fuel was brought, to burn the duke d'Aveiro's bravo, who had shot the king. He mounted in a pitched coat, and being forced to sit down to the stake, to which he was chained, the bodies were brought, one by one, and placed round him, being all strewed over with rosin, I believe an inch thick; then the faggots were laid on, and the whole set on fire. The effigy of the other brave, who had escaped, was also burned. After the execution the ashes were swept up and thrown into the Tagus.

"During the time of the execution, all the conspirators' houses were pulling down to the ground, and as soon as the rubbish could be removed, the

places on which they stood were sown with salt.* All those of their families which were spared, were obliged to change their names, for the conspirators were degraded from their honours the day before they suffered, and their estates were publicly sold by auction."

The blood runs cold at the recital of these enormities; but our horror is surpassed by our indignation at the atrocity of the government which could pass so brutal a sentence, and our contempt for the people who could tamely suffer it to be put into execution. My own feelings prompt me to give ready credence to the following paragraph, which I find in the newspaper subsequent to that from which I have copied the above narrative:—

"A gentleman at Imberley, in the county of Surrey, reading the account of the manner in which the conspirators were put to death at Lisbon, it affected his spirits so violently, that he just sighed ought, 'O my God!' and instantly expired."

TRUTH,
BOTTOM OF A WELL,
DEC. 6, 1822.

Interesting Varieties.

FATAL CONVICTION ON CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

An United States' newspaper tells us, "that a man was tried for and convicted of the murder of his own father. The evidence against him was merely circumstantial, and the principal witness was his sister. She proved that her father possessed a small income, which, with his industry, enabled him to live with comfort; that her brother, who was heir at law, had long expres-

sed a great desire to come into possession of his father's effects; and that he had long behaved in a very undutiful manner to him, wishing, as the witness believed, to put a period to his existence by uneasiness and vexation; that on the evening the murder was committed, the deceased went a small distance from the house, to milk a cow he had for some time kept, and that the witness also went out to spend the evening, and to sleep, leaving only her brother in the house; that returning home early in the morning, and finding that her father and brother were both absent, she was much alarmed, and sent for some of the neighbours to consult with them, and to receive advice what should be done; and in company with these neighbours, she went to the hovel in which her father was accustomed to milk the cow, where they found him murdered in a most inhuman manner, his head being almost beat to pieces; that a suspicion immediately falling on her brother, and there being then some snow upon the ground, in which the footsteps of a human being, to and from the hovel, were observed, it was agreed to take one of the brother's shoes, and to measure therewith the impression in the snow: this was done, and there did not remain a doubt but that the impressions were made with his shoes. Thus confirmed in their suspicions, they then immediately went to the prisoner's room, and after a diligent search, they found a hammer in the corner of a private drawer, with several spots of blood upon it, and a small splinter of bone and some brains in a crack which they discovered in the handle. The circumstance of finding the deceased and the hammer, as described by the former witness, were fully proved by the neighbours whom she called; and upon this evidence the prisoner was convicted and suffered death, but denied the act to the last. About four years afterwards, the witness was extremely ill, and understanding that there was no possible hopes of recovery, she confessed that her father and brother having offended her, she was determined that they should both die, and accordingly, when the former went to

* This practice was common to the Hebrews and other ancient nations, who, to denote the perpetuity of desolation in any place, sowed it with salt, because salt lands are barren. See Judges chap. 9, ver. 45, "And Abimelech beat down the city, and sowed it with salt." See, also, Jeremiah, chap. 7, ver. 6. and several other passages of scripture. Salt, however, properly applied to the surface of the earth, is productive of fertility.

taulk the cow, she followed him with her brother's hammer, and in his shoes. She beat out her father's brains with the hammer, and laid it where it was found; that she then went from home to give a better colour to this wicked business; and that her brother was perfectly innocent of the crime for which he had suffered. She was immediately taken into custody, but died before she could be brought to trial."

The Wit's Nunchion.

A QUESTION TO AN OBSERVER OF HUMAN NATURE.—Erastus had three sons whom he tenderly loved: walking, in company with all three, he was surprised by an assassin, who gave him a mortal wound and fled. Erastus fell. His eldest son pursued the assassin, overtook him, and stretched him on the earth. The second threw himself on the body of his father, and endeavoured to bind up his wounds. The third fell into a swoon. Now the question arose, which of the three sons loved the father most?

A wag has answered, "That they all three loved him equally: their different situations in life had an influence on the expression of their love. The eldest son was a soldier; he killed the murderer. The second was a lawyer; he rendered assistance. The third was a priest; he fell into a swoon."

AN IRISH WARNING—"Do not send for Dr. S—," said Captain O'Neal; "do not send for Dr. S—, for he once attended a young officer of our regiment, and upon my conscience, he stuffed the poor lad so unmercifully with potions and draughts, that he continued sick a fortnight after he was quite well."

A PEDIGREE.—A Welsh gentleman has, with much heraldical enquiry and deep study, drawn up a genealogical account of his own family, for upwards of twelve thousand years. In the middle of the manuscript there is—N. B. about this time the world was created.

HORRY.—At Quinby, Colonel Baxter, a gallant soldier, possessed of great coolness, and still greater simplicity of character, calling out, "I am wounded, colonel!"—Horry replied, "Think no more of it, Baxter, but stand to your post."—"But I can't stand, colonel, I am wounded a second time!"—"Then lie down, Baxter, but quit not your post."—"Colonel," cried the wounded man, "they have shot me again, and if I remain any longer here, I shall be shot to pieces."—"Be it so, Baxter, but stir not." He obeyed the order, and actually received the fourth wound before this engagement ended.

THEATRICAL MISTAKE.—A laughable blunder was made by Mrs. Gibbs, at Covent Garden Theatre, some time since, in the part of Miss Sterling, in the "Clandestine Marriage." When speaking of the conduct of Betty, who had locked the door of Miss Fanny's room, and walked away with the key, Mrs. G. said, "She had locked the key and carried away the door in her pocket."—Mrs. Davenport, as Mrs. Heidelberg, had previously excited a hearty laugh by substituting for the original dialogue, "I protest there's a candle coming along the gallery with a man in its hand; but the mistake by Mrs. Gibbs seemed to be unintentional, so unpremeditated, that the effect was irresistible, and the audience celebrated the joke with three rounds of applause.

AN Irish gentleman, exclaiming against the income tax, observed that he was now obliged to pay one tenth part of his income, and he supposed, if the war continued, he should be called upon to pay the twentieth part.

A field preacher, who had been a printer, observed, in his nasal harangue, that youth might be compared to a comma, manhood to a semicolon, old age to a colon, to which death puts a period, or full stop.

A painter turned physician, upon which change a friend applauded him, saying, "You have done well; for before, your faults could be discovered by the naked eye, but now they are hid."

Poetry.

AMBROSE AND HIS DOG.

BY W. M. HOLLAWAY.

The clock had struck the midnight hour,
And all the village slept,
Save Julia, list'ning to the shower.
She, lonely, watch'd and wept;

For, ere the sun peep'd o'er the hill,
To town her Ambrose went,
And sure some unexpected ill
Must his return prevent.

What though the wood he pass'd beside,
He heeded nothing fear,
For honest Dobbin was his guide,
And faithful Tray was there.

The heath was wild, the roads were bad,
'Twas dark and dreary too;
'Twas cold, but he was doubly clad,
And well the way he knew.

Thus while she ponder'd, clam'rous came
Poor Tray, with scratch and wine.
The mistress rose, and much to blame
This rudeness did incline.

As gladly she the door unbarr'd,
Her weary man to greet,
The gen'rous dog, with kind regard,
Rush'd fondling round her feet.

He moan'd, he howl'd, he seiz'd her gown
And drew her gently forth:
She follow'd him across the down,
For she had prov'd his worth.

Beside the road the quarries lay,
Capacious, dark, and deep;
The steed had swerv'd one step astray,
And tumbled down the steep.

There lay poor Ambrose, stunn'd & pale,
Unhurt his beast stands by;
And thither Tray, with frisking tail,
Attracts his mistress' eye.

Nor would he quit his master's side,
Such sympathy he found;
He lick'd his pallid cheek, and tried
To raise him from the ground.

Hear'n and her friends their aid afford
To Julia's tears and vows,
And soon to life and love restor'd
Her much lamented spouse.

On wintry nights, when beats the storm,
And howling winds prevail,
The children, round the brick hearth
warm,
Repeat the affecting tale.

While Tray outstretch'd, the fire enjoys,
And rests his long white chin

On their soft laps who speak his praise
And pat his downy skin.

O happy dog! No faithless man,
With prouder gifts endow'd,
Shall ever share with or scan
The joys of gratitude.

ON A CLOCK.

I serve thee here with all my might,
To tell the hours by day and night;
Therefore example take by me,
To serve thy God as I serve thee.

ON A LADY'S SECRECY.

"She's secret as the grave! allow."
"I do; I cannot doubt it;
But 'tis a grave with tombstone on,
That tells you all about it."

ON LOSING A WATCH.

He that a watch would wear, just this
must do,—
Pocket his watch, and WATCH his pocket
too.

ÆNIGMA.

If you transpose what ladies wear,
The word will show what harlots are:
Again if you transpose the same,
You'll see an ancient Hebrew name.
Change it again, and it will show
What all on earth desire to do;
Transpose the letters yet once more,
What bad men do you'll then explore.

HONESTY.

"Aye, honesty's a jewel," Richard cried,
"That shines the clearer still, the more
'tis tried."
"True, Dick," quoth Jerry; "yourself
may show it;
Your honesty's so clear,—we all see
THROUGH IT."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We shall ever feel extremely obliged
to Truth for his kind assistance.

We consider if we were to introduce
four Ks in the title of our work, it would
convey a meaning contrary to our in-
tention.

W. H. Young is under consideration.
No communications will be received
unless post paid.

Printed and Published by T. WALLIS, Camden
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THE NIC-NAC:

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

NO. IV.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1822.

PRICE 1d.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.

MAN IN THE SUN.

THE following very remarkable statement appeared in the "Times" newspaper, in the month of July, 1815, and the singular appearance it describes was also mentioned at that period in so many other quarters, that I believe there can be no question of its truth. The phenomenon may, perhaps, be accounted for upon natural grounds, and I shall be glad if any of your readers will undertake to explain it. When this is done, we shall have another instance of the way in which the ignorance of mankind has created a belief in miraculous agency, distinct from the operations of nature. Science has made us familiar with the nature of many things that were once deemed incomprehensible and portentous, and she is now invited to a new exertion to solve the very curious phenomenon below described.

Several papers, we understand, both in America and England, have noticed the remarkable circumstance which we are now about to describe. The following is an authentic and correct account, for the truth of which Captain Hayes, of his Majesty's ship *Majestic*, now lying in Plymouth harbour, and the whole of his officers and ship's company may be appealed to:—

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"On the morning of the 27th of August, 1813, the *Majestic* being then off Boston, the men on board observed, at the rising of the sun, the complete figure of a man in the centre of that luminary, with a flag divided by three lines in his hand. He was at first on his back, but as day advanced he gradually assumed an erect posture, and at mid-day stood upright: towards evening he as gradually declined, descending with his flag head foremost. We have seen a drawing of the phenomenon, and nothing can be more correct than the human figure, its dress complete, and the flag.

"On the 28th it retained the same outline, but had become a skeleton.

"On the 29th the figure was disjointed, and its parts gradually assumed the appearance of six separate flags, united in a circle by an apparent cord or line. After this, nothing more was observed on the sun's rise than a few small spots.

"The American papers, we believe, notice only the extraordinary appearance of the sun on the above-mentioned days. Perhaps the observers on that continent were not in a position to catch the precise appearance which the particles of matter presented to the ship's company of the *Majestic*. There could be no optical delusion on the occasion, as the phenomenon was observed by so many different eyes, and for so long a time. The first figure was seen during the whole of the 27th, the skeleton the whole of the 28th, and the six flags during a great part of the 29th.

"The above is an occurrence which may merit the attention of the philosophic. It is singular, we conceive, but nothing miraculous or potentous. Indeed, as the sun is the centre of a system of planets, several of which are much larger and probably more important than ours, we do not know why this common luminary should shape his face, or have it shaped for him, so as to indicate the particular occurrences of this earth.

The sun is no doubt a material luminous body,—perhaps liable to an internal irregular motion of its parts; at least this phenomenon would seem to prove it so: and most people have observed how frequently the ignited cinders of a common fire present at different times the various appearances of men, trees, horses, houses, &c. The evidence, however, for the phenomenon itself, we must again add, is of the most undoubted and respec-

able kind. We have seen, and have by us, copies of drawings made by Captain Hayes on the occasion."

FRISK.

The English Traveller.

INNS.

THE waiter may, by a keen eye, be discovered counting his perquisites in his mind, and considering which way he shall play off the guest, not for his master's credit, but for his own advantage. Call for a pint of wine, and you are sure to have a collection of dregs; there is no safety in his bringing in a bottle, and proclaiming his apparent diligence by the report of the cork; for when a bottle of wine is pretended to be decanted, the last glass and a half are left behind; and thus, in about every ten bottles one of them becomes the waiter's perquisite.

If the accumulation is made from the wine delivered out for large parties, the waiter sometimes gets a good stock in one evening, some of which odds and ends he has the audacity to serve up when the faculties of the company are rendered incapable of distinguishing. To be sure he may be detected, and the bottle may be thrown at his head; so much the better; he gets a crown by it for smart money.

As to the chambermaid, her conduct is always regulated by what she can get by her customers; and, if she knows any thing of her business, she will take care to make her bargain before hand. Ladies are shewn into rooms not fit to be seen, and where it would be the extreme of inhumanity to let any body sleep: but what is humanity to a chambermaid? the hints are broad enough, and if they are not taken, and a handsome promise is not seriously given, is it her fault that inconvenience is incurred, comfort banished, and health endangered?

In relation to sheets, nothing can be so infamously unfeeling as the practices that are used. Clean sheets are out of the question; it is very seldom indeed that guests meet with any such indulgence. The practice is to take them from the bed to sprinkle them

with water, to fold them down, and then put them in a press. When they are wanted, they are, literally speaking, shewn to the fire, and in a reeking state conveyed to the bed. The traveller is tired and sleepy; he dreams of that pleasure or that business which brought him from home, and the remotest thing from his mind is, that from the very repose which he fancies has refreshed him, he has imbibed the rheumatism. The only receipt, therefore, to sleep comfortably at inns, which has been my constant practice, is to take your own sheets, to have plenty of flannel gowns, and to promise, and take care to pay, a handsome consideration for the liberty of choosing your beds,

As to the hostlers, they are a set of tricksters from their infancy; and if you cannot be with your horses early in the morning and late at night, you will infallibly be cheated. To see the feed put in the manger is nothing at all, you must stay till it is eaten; but these tricks, which are innumerable, being better known than the rest, I shall say nothing further to servants at inns, but direct an attention to masters, some of whom do not know, and others perhaps do not care, that they are answerable by the law to their guests for these various frauds, because they cannot be committed but through their connivance.

There are no species of inns under any thing like regulation, except those which are called travellers' inns, and even the landlords of these are not correct in their conduct, except to travellers, which appellation takes in riders of all descriptions, whether masters or servants, who journey to receive the order of correspondents. At the travellers' inn every thing is methodized and regulated, and the expence of every kind is ascertained before the bill is brought in. They have a large body to contend with, and are obliged to abide by those laws laid down for them, which, to say the truth, are by no means slavish or illiberal, though positive and invariable; for as these gentlemen have all been brought up to calculation, and taught either to weigh or measure out goods as well as ideas,

a certain estimate may be made by the guest of what he shall pay in the course of his travels, and by the landlord of what he shall gain in the course of the year.

I have hitherto spoken of inns, and the operation of their conduct on the public, as far as may give a general idea of the treatment to be expected by those, of whom it is often the misfortune, but sometimes the satisfaction to resort to them. They were originally instituted for the solace of travellers, and there could not have been a wiser or more salutary regulation. Inn-keepers are forbidden by the law to charge exorbitantly, either for man or horse, to vend corrupt wine or victuals, and to do many other things which all the world knows is the constant practice of too many of them.

I was once witness to a keen manœuvre practised by the landlords of a large town in the race week. They had advertised their beds a guinea a-piece, and, fearing at the same time that, on account of the exorbitant demand, visitors should be induced to take lodgings at private houses, they procured, with great art and industry, a promise from the private inhabitants, that they would ask the same price. This was the upshot: the strangers said, if we can get lodgings no cheaper at private houses than at inns, we had better go where our horses can be taken care of. Thus few private lodgings were let, the inns were full, and the landlords laughed at the credulity of their neighbours.—(End of Inns.—Begins on page 3.)

C. D.

ORMSKIRK CHURCH.

“AT Ormskirk, near Liverpool, the church has two steeples, one pointed, the other square. This singular circumstance is thus accounted for:—Two sisters, of the name of Orme, resolved to provide the town with a church, but not being able to agree about the form of the steeple (the one wishing it pointed, and the other obtuse), it was at last agreed that each should build one according to her own fancy; and consequently it

was ornamented with two steeples.” SPIKER’S TRAVELS IN 1816.

The above circumstance is widely different from what happened at Hackney, at which place the church had nearly gone without a steeple at all (unless the old one, some distance off, could be thought sufficient). Advertisements were issued, and contract made to erect a CHURCH THERE. It was finished, but no steeple to it.—The contractor maintained he only engaged to build a church,—he engaged for no steeple, and he gained the day; and hence the church stood, till within the last seven years, WITHOUT A STEEPLE; about which time one was erected by a Mr. Streather of the parish, but not large enough to contain the bells, &c. which remain in the old one at a distance.

S. S. S.

THE

FORTUNATE DISCOVERY.

(Concluded from page 18.)

“Your honor’s very condescending,” replied the dame, as she bustled about to lay the table for her noble guest, “to notice our poor house, your —.”

“No compliments, good dame: necessity impelled me to seek shelter beneath your hospitable roof,” rejoined the baronet, with the greatest familiarity.

The repast being now declared ready for his honor, he was infinitely surprised on beholding a small fowl on the table, which the dame observed, and misconstruing its meaning, expressed her regret that she was unable to lay before his honor a hot supper, but hoped he would excuse it.

Sir Joseph made no reply to this compliment, resolving to reward the good couple by other means, but begged his host and hostess to sit down and make their supper equally the same as if he were not present.

His request was unheard by them. They were expressing their concern at the lengthened stay of the lady Angelica and her son Joseph.

The name struck on the baronet’s ear: he started from his seat: a sen-

sation thrilled his whole frame. Angelica—his long lost Angelica, might, perhaps, have repented her fault, and, in the obscurity of this lonely mountain, screened herself from the search of her doting husband, and heaven had in pity sent him to relieve her sufferings. Her son—could this be the offspring of her guilt—terror pervaded his soul—and he sunk back in his chair in agony.

Morgan and his wife yielded him every assistance in their power, and in a few minutes he became more composed. "Speak! oh, speak!" he wildly exclaimed. "Tell me if my Angelica lives. Oh, heavens!" He could no more: his eloquent eyes, now swimming in tears, told the agony of his heart.

The cottagers gazed at each other in dismay: at length Morgan broke silence.

"Go, fetch the jewel, dame," said he. She instantly departed, and presently returned with a small locket, which she gave to Morgan.

"Does your honor know this trinket?" said he, presenting it to the baronet. "'Tis our Angelica's."

The baronet took the locket, and pressed it to his lips. He knew it: 'twas her: his long lost wife was now discovered, and utterance was refused to his over-charged heart.

In a short time, the baronet having effected composure, he enquired where his Angelica was.

"She is generally," said Morgan, "in the ruins of the cottage, on the top of the mountain, where she sometimes stays all night. Poor lady! she is so melancholy and ——."

"Lead me to the spot!" Procure a torch this instant!" vociferated the almost delirious baronet.

"Here is a lanthorn, your honor; won't this do?" replied Morgan.

"Yes, yes: fly: conduct me to her," he cried, as he hastened after Morgan, the old dame bringing up the rear. In this position they proceeded to the ruins; and as they wound round the building, Angelica, in a mournful voice, exclaimed, "How cruelly do they break on my retirement!"

"'Tis her! 'tis her! my beloved Angelica!" said the baronet, as he rushed into the arms of his long-lost wife.

Here let my humble pen stop, nor draw censure on its weak presumptuous effort, by attempting to delineate the scene which now ensued. Words are inadequate to the task. But, oh! what raptures pervaded the hearts of the little group, as with joy they retraced their way to the cottage, which had, for years, been the asylum of the wretched Angelica, who had, as has been before hinted, eloped with an artful villain, whose perfidious intentions were happily frustrated by the impulse of returning virtue in the heart of the guilty fair, who, unable to bear the reproach of the world, had proceeded to the retired spot where Sir Joseph had so providentially discovered her, where, in a few months, she was delivered of a son, the infant heir of Sir Joseph.

Being possessed of jewels and money to a large value, she had not been of any expence to her kind protectors until within the last three years, during which time she had been entirely dependant on their generosity.

Sir Joseph being convinced of her purity, pressed her to his heart, in token of his forgiveness for her indiscretions.

His son now claimed his most ardent affection: he embraced the willing youth, who, with tearful eyes (tears of gratitude and joy), threw himself on his knees, and craved his father's blessing.

How powerfully did this appeal affect the father's heart: he laid his trembling hand on the head of the youth, and gave him his desire, solemnly invoking the Allwise Protector of innocence to confirm the same.

The morning had far advanced ere this joyous eclaireissement was concluded; and Sir Joseph was just giving directions to Morgan to seek some youth to fetch a carriage from Caergybi, when a loud rapping at the door announced some visitor, and on being opened, the valet of Sir Joseph entered, whose joy, on beholding his master safe, was extreme; and, from

the account he gave, it appeared that the whole of the baronet's attendants, and many of the servants of the inn at which Sir Joseph had put up, had been the whole night in search of him.

Sir Joseph, after expressing his thanks, and promising to reward him and his fellows for their integrity, dispatched him to fetch a carriage, which, in less than an hour, arrived, when Sir Joseph and lady Philipps, together with their amiable son, bade a short farewell to the benevolent cottagers.

Sir Joseph shortly after settled a very handsome annuity on Morgan and his wife, which enabled them to live in comfort the remainder of their days.

Sir Joseph, on his arrival in the metropolis, took particular care to erase every unfavorable impression from the public mind, with respect to the conduct of his wife, which was confirmed by Mr. Mowbray, the villain, whose machinations were the sole cause of the temporary dereliction from virtue of lady Philipps, and she was once more received, free from the taint of suspicion, into the polite circles she had so heroically abandoned.

The family estates were repurchased by Sir Joseph. The youthful Joseph, steady in virtue, is beloved by all; and the good and benevolent baronet blesses the chance which led him to the mountains of Caergybi.

W. B. J.

Interesting Varieties.

SAVING BANKS.—Curious hint to depositors in banks for savings, who are to receive compound interest for their money. The difference between the increase of money at simple and compound interest is notorious, but it cannot be placed in a more striking point of view than in the following case:—One penny put out at five per cent. compound interest, at our Saviour's birth, would, at the present period, have increased to almost as great a sum as could be contained in three hundred and nineteen millions of globes, each equal to the earth in

size, and all solid gold; but one penny put out at simple interest, would, in the same time, have amounted to no more than seven shillings and eight pence farthing!

* A QUEER AFFAIR.

SOME years ago, a very uncommon affair happened. An old gentleman, pursuant to his will, was carried to a country village in the west of England, to be interred with his ancestors; and four servants, in a mourning-coach, besides the undertaker and six of his men, were ordered by the executors to attend upon the corpse, agreeably to the will of the deceased. When they had got within a few miles of their journey's end, they stopped at a public-house to plume their hearse, and put their trappings in order, for they had had such stormy and tempestuous weather the three preceding days, that they had not been able to exhibit one feather to public view. The landlord of the house, being a jocose merry fellow, and formerly a companion to the deceased, would insist upon the company's taking part of a large bowl of punch at his expence, after the reckoning was paid. While this was preparing, the driver of the hearse (unlike the rest of his brethren) told his master that he did not like punch, and if he pleased he would go gently on, till such time as they should overtake him. He had got not above half a mile from the place, before he came to a small rivulet, which, by the heavy rains that had lately fallen, had overflowed its banks, and laid the road for several hundred yards under water: and being a stranger in that country, he got a little out of the common track; so that when he was at the opposite shore, he found he had a steep and rugged bank to climb; however, he performed it, though not without great difficulty; for, by the sudden jolts he met with, the coffin unloosed itself, and, by tossing to and fro, forced open the door of the hearse, and, in rising the bank, fell topsy-turvy into the river, and went down the stream several yards. The driver, not perceiving any thing amiss, and the door closing itself again, kept

jogging on. He was soon after joined by the rest of the mournful tribe, and a great number of his honor's tenants, who accompanied him to the church-yard gate; where the whole parish was assembled to form the funeral train, and sing a requiem for his departed soul. All this while, nobody perceived the corpse was lost; and every thing was conducted with great order and decency, and not a head was seen without a streamer.

The bearers being ready, the mourners placed, and every thing in order, the undertaker commanded the corpse to be unheard: but, no corpse were there: every body was struck with wonder and amazement. The undertaker stood aghast. The driver, enfeebled and unable to support himself, let loose his reins. The porters appeared like so many statues, motionless and dumb. In this dilemma they continued for some time. They very well knew that it was safe the preceding night, and how to account for its being gone, no one could conceive or imagine.

After a long pause, one of the company recollected, that the landlord of the inn where they lay last, exercised the trade of a plumber, as well as that of keeping a public-house, and that nothing could be more probable than that he had stolen the corpse for the sake of the leaden coffin. This was no sooner observed to the undertaker, who was overwhelmed with shame and confusion, than he mounted his steed, hurried back, seized upon the landlord, and dragged him before a magistrate, who, upon the oath of the undertaker, committed him to prison. This very much alarmed the neighbourhood; and every body was in deep concern for the landlord, for he had always borne the best character of any publican in that part of the west; and was remarkable for selling the best ale, and the largest measure, of any of his brother landlords.

The next morning the waters, being somewhat abated, began to run clear, so that the nails of the coffin might be seen to glisten, which an old woman (who was crossing the bridge a little below) observing, imagined

them to be the scales of some enormous-sized fish that had come up the flood, and was so entangled amongst the weeds, as not to be able to make its escape. This she related to some more old women she chanced to meet: one of them said it was a prediction of some great event, for just such a fish as she described, was caught in the same river, the very day that King Charles the First was beheaded, and that the clerk of the parish had a memorandum of it in writing, which he found amongst his great grandmother's curiosities. The report of so surprising and uncommon a phenomenon, soon drew together a vast number of the country-people, who, from the heights above, could easily perceive the glittering in the water, but no body was suffered to go any nearer till nets were fixed for preventing its escape. Meanwhile, a noted game-keeper, who was a very expert marksman, and lived hard by, was called in to their assistance. This fellow was to load with a double quantity of powder, for, said some of them, when the fish was caught here upwards of a hundred years ago, a cannon-ball would not pierce its skin. However, the keeper's ball penetrated through the whole; they then drew their nets over it, and brought it to the river side, and plainly discovered it to be the coffin which the honest landlord was imprisoned for stealing. This lucky discovery caused the undertaker to be recalled, the publican restored, the body entombed, and the people satisfied.

TRUTH.

BOTTOM OF A WELL.

ENGLISH PROVERBIAL SAYINGS, WITH MORAL REFLECTIONS.

AS YOU BREW, SO YOU SHALL BAKE.—This proverb is applicable to such as act hand over head in matters of moment, without the precaution of good counsel and advice; and all the slips, mismanagements, and afflictions, of both old or young, through rashness or oversight, are exposed to this bitter reproach—as she has brewed, even so let her bake; so the

father says to a daughter that has married, to her misfortune, without his consent.

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME.—This proverb was well intended, and grounded upon that passage of the Apostle which says, "That he who provides not for his own household, is worse than an infidel." But as the best institutions have been abused, so this proverb is become a defence to the uncharitable, who have not the natural affection to relieve the necessitous poor out of their abundance, thereby intimating, most unchristianly, that self-love is the measure of our love to our neighbour.

WHAT CAN'T BE CURED MUST BE ENDURED.—This is a consolatory saying, applicable to persons under the pressure of some inevitable calamity, and advises us to make a virtue of necessity, and not to aggravate but alleviate the burthen.

THE WONDERFUL CUNNING OF A FOX, FROM OLD MSS.—To prove that this creature has a kind of reasoning with itself, Sir Henry Wotton told the following story to king James :—A fox had killed a young pig, and was to cross a river to his den. By the water-side some alder trees had been newly stubbed, and there lay chips of all sizes. The fox, before he could venture himself and his prey into the stream, weighs the danger, weighs the pig, and divers chips after it. At last he takes up into his mouth one of the heaviest, passeth the river with it, and, arriving safely, comes back to fetch his pig.

A story of the same nature the earl of Southampton related to the king :—In his brook-hawking, at Shellingford, he saw divers fowls on the river, and, a little way up the stream, a fox very busy by the bank-side. The earl delayed his sport on purpose to see what Reynard was about. He saw him very busy fetching the green sod, which had been cut a few yards from the river. He takes two or three, one after another, in his mouth, and lets them drive towards the fowl. After he had well familiarized them to

this stratagem, he puts many more together, and himself after them, with one in his mouth, and under this cover, gaining on the thickest part of the fowl, suddenly darts from his ambush, and seizes one. This did the earl report, as being an eye-witness to the fact.

W. E. CHATTERTON.

ANAGRAMS.

Old England - - - - Golden Land.
Radical Reform - - Rare mad frolic.
Presbyterian - - - Best in prayer.
Parishioners - - - I hire parsons.
Penitentiary - - - - Nay, I repent it.

The Wit's Nunchian.

THE WISHES GRATIFIED.—In order to ascertain the idea a sailor had of happiness, and the compass of his wants, he was informed that every thing he could wish for in three times should be given him. "Why, then," cries Jack, "let me have all the rum in the world." What next? "Why let me have all the tobacco in the world." And what else? "Damme, if I know :—why you may give me a little more rum!"

A FAIR PREFERENCE.—A grandee of Spain, handing some refreshments to a circle of ladies, observed one with a most brilliant ring, and was rude enough to say in her hearing, "I should prefer the ring to the hand." "And I," said the lady, looking steadfastly at the glittering order suspended to the don's neck, "should prefer the collar to the beast."

The late Sir Fletcher Norton was in the character of a counsellor, and once examining Alderman Shakespeare, as a witness, said, in a very rude way, "And pray what trade are you?" "A rope-maker, at your service!" replied the alderman.

A FLIRT.—A finished coquette, at a ball, asked a gentleman near her, whilst she adjusted her tucker, whether he could flirt a fan, which she held in

her hand. "No, madam," said he, "proceeding to use it, "but I can fan a flirt!"

Charles Bannister being in company, and the conversation turning upon dreams, a person who put great faith in them, observed, that something serious was likely to befall himself, for the night before he had dreamed of lice. Bannister replied that that was not at all wonderful, as people generally dreamed at night of what had been "running in their heads the day before!"

Cicero was once at dinner, in company with Fabia Dolabella, an ancient lady, who speaking of her age, said, she was but thirty years old. One who sat by Cicero, whispered in his ear, "She talks of thirty years; beyond all question she must be considerably more." "Nay," replied Cicero, loud enough to be heard, "I must believe her, for I have heard her say the same thing these twenty years."

When Hogarth first set up his carriage, he paid a visit to the Lord Mayor, and having protracted his stay till a heavy shower of rain came on, he was let out of a different door from that which he entered, and not thinking of his carriage, set off on foot, and got home dripping wet. When Mrs. Hogarth asked him where he had left his carriage, he said he had forgot it!

When Oliver Cromwell first coined his money, an old cavalier looking on one of the new pieces, read this inscription on one side, God with us: on the other, The Commonwealth of England. "I see," said he, "God and the Commonwealth are on different sides."

An honest Hibernian, whose bank (his pocket, to use his own phrase) had stopp'd payment, was forced to the sad necessity of perambulating the streets of Edinburgh two nights together, for want of a few pence to pay his lodgings: when accidentally hearing a person talk of the Lying-in hospital, he exclaimed, "That's the place for me! where is it, honey? for I have been lying out these two nights past."

Poetry.

THE POWER OF INTEREST.

Interest at court, a minister can save;
Interest in camps, can make a coward brave.
Interest at church, can make a bishop rave;
Interest at 'change, can make a fool a knave.
Interest can make a patriot a slave;
Interest can teach ill manners to behave.
Interest can raise, and interest can deprave,
Interest the passage to preferment pave;
Who, if he could, then, would not interest have?

ALL WEATHERS.

In England, if two are conversing together,
The subject begins with the state of the weather;
And ever the same, both with young and with old,
'Tis either too hot, or either too cold—
'Tis either too wet, or either too dry—
The glass is too low, or else 'tis too high.
But, if all had their wishes once jumbled together;
The devil himself could not live in such weather.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We feel much pleased with the encomium which W. E. Chatterton has so kindly bestowed on our taste, but beg leave to differ from his opinion as regards doubling the price and contents of "The Nic-Nac," for judging, from the observations of numerous friends, that the greatest part of the collection is of standing worth, we think its economical plan will be the more worthy of encouragement.

Truth is particularly entitled to our most sincere thanks for his very kind assistance. His signature to his first packet put us in mind of an old Correspondent, from whom, a few years back, we received many favors—a vivid recollection of which our gratitude will ever retain.

No communications will be received unless post paid.

Printed and Published by T. WALLIS, Camden Town; and sold by all Booksellers and Newsmen, in Town and Country.—Price One Penny.

Second Edition.

THE NIG-NAG; OR, ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. V.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1822.

PRICE 1d.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.

ASSASSINATION OF THE EMPEROR PAUL OF RUSSIA.



THE assertion made by Buonaparte, that the Emperor Alexander was privy to the murder of his father (vide O'Meara's "Voice from St. Helena,") having recalled the public attention to that event, the following particulars of it, extracted from Carr's "Northern Summer," 4to. 1805, may perhaps be acceptable to our readers.

It was the custom of the emperor to sleep in an outer apartment next to the empress's, upon a sofa, in his regimentals and boots, whilst the grand duke and duchess, and the rest of the imperial family, were lodged at various distances, in apartments below the story which he occupied. On the tenth day of March, O. S. 1801, the day preceding the fatal night, whether Paul's apprehension, or anonymous information, suggested the idea, is not known, but conceiving that a storm was ready to burst upon him, he sent to Count P—, the governor of the city, one of the noblemen who had re-

solved on his destruction: "I am informed, P—," said the emperor, "that there is a conspiracy on foot against me; do you think it necessary to take any precaution?" The count, without betraying the least emotion, replied, "Sire, do not suffer such apprehensions to haunt your mind; if there were any combination forming against your majesty's person, I am sure I should be acquainted with it." "Then I am satisfied," said the emperor, and the governor withdrew. Before Paul retired to rest, he unexpectedly expressed the most tender solicitude for the empress and his children, kissed them with all the warmth of farewell fondness, and remained with them longer than usual; and after he had visited the centinels at their different posts, he retired to his chamber, where he had not long remained, before, under some colourable pretext, that satisfied the men, the guard was changed by the officers

who had the command for the night, and were engaged in the confederacy. An hussar, whom the emperor had particularly honored by his notice and attention, always at night slept at his bed-room door, in the anti-room. It was impossible to remove this faithful soldier by any fair means. At this momentous period, silence reigned throughout the palace, except where it was disturbed by the pacing of the centinels, or at a distance by the murmurs of the Neva, and only a few lights were to be seen distantly and irregularly gleaming through the windows of the dark colossal abode. In the dead of the night, Z— and his friends, amounting to eight or nine persons, passed the draw-bridge, easily ascended the staircase which led to Paul's chamber, and met with no resistance till they reached the anti-room, when the faithful hussar, awakened by the noise, challenged them, and presented his fusée: much as they must have all admired the brave fidelity of the guard, neither time nor circumstances would admit of an act of generosity, which might have endangered the whole plan. Z— drew his sabre and cut the poor fellow down. Paul, awakened by the noise, sprung from his sofa; at this moment the whole party rushed into his room; the unhappy sovereign, anticipating their design, at first endeavoured to entrench himself in the chairs and tables; then recovering, he assumed a high tone, told them they were his prisoners, and called upon them to surrender. Finding that they fixed their eyes steadily and fiercely upon him, and continued advancing towards him, he implored them to spare his life, declared his consent instantly to relinquish the sceptre, and to accept of any terms which they would dictate. In his raving, he offered to make them princes, and to give them estates, and titles, and orders, without end. They now began to press upon him, when he made a convulsive effort to reach the window: in the attempt he failed, and indeed so high was it from the ground, that had he succeeded, the expedient would only have put a more instantaneous period to his misery.

In the effort he very severely cut his hand with the glass; and as they drew him back he grasped a chair, with which he felled one of the assailants, and a desperate resistance took place. So great was the noise, that, notwithstanding the massy walls, and thick double-folding doors, which divided the apartments, the empress was disturbed, and began to cry for help, when a voice whispered in her ear, and imperatively told her to remain quiet, otherwise, if she uttered another word, she should be put to instant death. Whilst the emperor was thus making a last struggle, the prince Y— struck him on one of his temples with his fist, and laid him upon the floor; Paul, recovering from the blow, again implored his life; at this moment the heart of P— Z— relented, and upon being observed to tremble and hesitate, a young Hanoverian resolutely exclaimed, "We have passed the Rubicon: if we spare his life, before the setting of to-morrow's sun, we shall be his victims!" Upon which he took off his sash, turned it twice round the naked neck of the emperor, and giving one end to Z—, and holding the other himself, they pulled for a considerable time with all their force, until their miserable sovereign was no more; they then retired from the palace without the least molestation, and returned to their respective homes. What occurred after their departure can be better conceived than depicted: medical aid was resorted to, but in vain, and upon the breathless body of the emperor fell the tears of his widowed empress and children, and domestics; nor was genuine grief ever more forcibly or feelingly displayed than by him on whose brow this melancholy event had planted the crown.

The English Traveller.

LOCAL SINGULARITIES OF A DISTRICT IN YORKSHIRE.

UPON the middle of Braham Moor a man may see ten miles round him;— within those ten miles there is as much free stone as would build ten cities as large as York (and York is supposed

to be as large as London within the walls);—within those ten miles is as much good oak timber as would build those ten cities;—within those ten miles is as much lime-stone, and coals to burn into lime, as would build those ten cities;—there is also as much clay and sand, and coals to burn them into bricks and tiles, as would build those ten cities;—within those ten miles there are two iron forges, sufficient to furnish iron to build those ten cities, and 10,000 tons to spare;—within those ten miles there is lead sufficient, and 10,000 fodder to spare; within those ten miles there is a good coal seam, sufficient to furnish those cities with firing for 10,000 years;—within those ten miles are three navigable rivers, Ouse, Ware, and Wharfe, at the foot of which a man may take shipping, and sail to any part of the world;—within those ten miles are seventy gentlemen's houses, all keeping coaches, and the least of them an esquire; and ten parks and forests, well stocked with deer;—and within those ten miles are ten market-towns, each of which is supposed to return 10,000*l.* per week.—(From a manuscript of John Watson, Esq. who, about the year 1730, resided at Malton, in Yorkshire.)

Interesting Varieties.

ÆREAL COMBATS.

- In a pamphlet published, as it imports, for B. B. London, in 1622, we read, that in the 12th of Richard II. a battle was fought between gnats, at Shene, now called Richmond: their multitudes were so great, that the air was darkened by them. It was computed that two parts of them were killed, and the remaining third suddenly vanished. This account is inserted as preliminary to one of an engagement between the starlings, at Cork, in Ireland, on the 12th of October, 1621: they mustered four or five days previously, every day increasing in number. Some came from the east, others from the west, and, as it were, encamped themselves eastward and westward of the city. Dur-

ing the time of their assembling, those who came from the east, sought their meat eastward, and those from the west, sought theirs westward; no one flying in the circuits of the other. On Saturday, the 12th of October, they fought, and on Sunday none were to be seen. Upon this Sunday a similar battle was seen between Gravesend and Woolwich, and a raven flying between the combatants. On Monday, the 14th, they again appeared at Cork, and fought with as much violence as before, the dead and wounded falling on the houses, into the streets, and the river. After this battle there were found dead a kite, a raven, and a crow.

Another pamphlet, printed at Oxford, for J. Colley, 1676, and purporting to be a translation of one published at Lisle, on the 17th of March, in the same year, relates a prodigious battle of birds, between Dole and Salines, in the Franche Comte, on the 26th of February, 1676. The most numerous of the warriors were of a description not very much unlike our scare-crows, but there were above a hundred kinds. After fighting several hours, those who were not disabled, retired no man knew whither. Bushes as high as men were hidden, and the earth covered with heaps of them for above five hundred paces in length, and the screams of the wounded and dying terrified the inhabitants of Burgundy. This extraordinary engagement had been predicted by Nostradamus, about the end of the first century, in his 100th article.

The above pamphlets are now extremely scarce; they are, however, still extant in the British Museum and the libraries of the curious.

TURKISH JUSTICE.—The Turkish ambassador, who was at Paris, in 1798, bought a diamond of a jeweller in that city. While the bargain was concluding, one of his people stole a ring. A little child saw this and told his father, after the Turk was gone. The jeweller immediately wrote to the ambassador, who sent him word that he should wait twen-

ty four hours. After the expiration of this time, the jeweller received a box, directed to him, which he opened, and found in it the head of the thief, with the ring between his teeth!

ATTACHMENT TO ANIMALS.

SOME years since, two persons died in Paris, who had been all their lives remarkable for attachment to animals. One was a person of property; he inhabited a small house; on the first floor he kept guinea pigs, on the second, pigeons; during thirty years he had been celebrated for having the finest animals of those species. His house was deserted by all his friends, in consequence of the intolerable stench arising from his menagerie. His property would have been sufficient to have supported him with respectability, but he had expended so much in food for his favourites, and in the improvement of his stock, that when he died not a shilling was left. His relations were obliged to sell off all the guinea pigs and pigeons to defray his funeral expenses.

The other singular character was a person who constantly carried dogs in his pockets. He was, in every sense, the friend and supporter of that valuable quadruped. His bread and soup he always shared with his favourites: they were his constant companions, and he watched over them with the care of a nurse. He had terriers, poodles, spaniels, and, in short, one of almost every breed. As they increased in number and size, he found himself at a loss to carry them in his usual way; however, he at last contrived to keep one under each arm, two in his pockets, and one on his shoulder. Thus engaged, he frequently enjoyed a promenade on the Boulevard, followed by the rest of his companions. The ridicule of the passers had no effect. He preferred the comfort of his canine favorites to his own, and the pleasure he derived from his management of them more than compensated for the jokes and satire of the public. About two years before his death he had the misfortune to lose his sight, and in that situation his

dogs returned the kindness received from their master. Determined not to part from them, he fastened the whole to a cord, and his faithful companions led him occasionally to the favourite walk on which he had led them. At his death the howling of the animals was dreadful, but the person who inherited his property, having less sensibility than the deceased, applied a horse-whip, and forced them into the street, where they remained about the house until the body was laid into the grave. What became of the dogs after I did not learn. This, however, was on the whole a most striking instance of mutual attachment between man and the most grateful of all animals.

THE GOOSE AND DOG.

THE following story of a goose and a dog, is from a provincial paper:—“At Little Grove, in Hertfordshire, was a goose of the species called Canada geese, which are fond of roaming at large, and do not like confinement. This goose, however, had contracted such a friendship for the yard dog, that she continually kept near his house, in which he was chained, quitting it only when she went for food, and the moment she had eaten it, returning to her post. Thus she sat all day by the house of her favourite, though she never attempted to go into it, unless it rained. If the dog barked, she immediately began to cackle, flew at the person with whom she supposed the dog to be offended, and endeavoured to bite his legs. Sometimes she attempted to partake of the dog's food, but this the dog, who repaid the warmth of her friendship with apparent indifference, would not permit. When the rest of the poultry retired to rest, she would not quit her dog without compulsion. In the morning, when driven to the field with the others, there was no getting her away from the gate of the courtyard where she could at least have a sight of the dog, and before which she would sit the whole day. At length the owner of the goose resolved to leave her to follow her own inclinations. Being thus at liberty to obey

the impulse of her attachment, she paraded about the yard at night with the dog, while he was on the watch; and in the day, when he took a walk into the village, she accompanied him, sometimes walking, sometimes flying, to keep pace with his trot. This extraordinary attachment continued till the dog's death, which happened two years after it had been first noticed. During the illness of the dog, she never left him, even to procure food, and would probably have been starved if some corn had not been placed in a dish by the dog's house. The whole of the time she staid in the house, and would not suffer any one to come near it, except the person who brought the dog and herself food. The goose's end was melancholy. After the death of the dog, she would not leave the house for a long time. At length a dog of nearly the same size and colour being procured as his successor, the poor creature, deceived by outward appearance, and supposing it to be her old friend, went confidently into the house to the dog, who seized her by the neck, and killed her on the spot."

FRISK.

ENGLISH PROVERBIAL SAYINGS.

WITH MORAL REFLECTIONS.

EVERY BEAN HAS ITS BLACK.—This is an excusatory proverb for the common failings of mankind; and intimates, that there is no man perfect in all points, wise in all respects, or awake at all hours: and is a satire against censoriousness.

ONE BIRD IN THE HAND IS WORTH TWO IN THE BUSH.—This proverb implies that possession is a mighty matter, and cautions us not to run into the hazard of a certain loss for an uncertain gain: it also teaches us, that futurities are liable to disappointments, and that there is no depending on SHALL and WILL hereafter; as well as that there is no possibility to command things at present out of our reach.

A CAT MAY LOOK AT A KING.—This is a saucy proverb, generally made use of by pragmatical persons,

who must needs be censuring their superiors, take things by the worst handle, and carry them beyond their bounds, for though peasants may look at and honour great men, patriots, and potentates, yet they are not to spit in their faces.

CURIOUS FACT.

WASSE informs us that having measured a great many sedentary people and day-laborers of all ages and shapes, he found the difference of their height, in the morning and at night, to be near an inch. He tried himself, when sitting, and found it in the like manner; particularly once, when the weather was warm and no wind; he sat down at eleven o'clock in the morning, and fixed an iron pin, so as to touch it, and that but barely; afterwards he fatigued himself for half an hour with a garden roller, and the consequence was, that at twelve he could not reach the nail, sitting, by nearly half an inch; at two o'clock the same day, he wanted near three quarters of an inch. On the next day, at six in the morning, he touched the nail fully, and after the above-mentioned exercise, for only a quarter of an hour, at seven he fell short. On another day, having sat up late on the night previous, he was faint, and felt himself heavy upon the ground, and without any spring; and at nine that morning, he did not reach the nail, though he had used no exercise; he rode out, but he could not reach it that day. On the next day he rode about four miles, and at six that morning, he reached the nail; by eight he had lost three quarters of an inch. One day he came somewhat tired from Oxford; and next morning at eight he wanted half an inch. If he studied closely (though he never stirred from his writing desk) yet, in five or six hours, he would lose near an inch; all the difference he found between laborers and sedentary people, is, that the former are longer in losing their morning height, and sink rather less in the whole, than the latter. He could not perceive, that when the height is lost, it can be regained by any rest that day, or by the use of the cold bath. Wasse once measured his

mare (who was seven years old, strong, short-backed, and well legged) before and after riding twenty miles, and could not perceive the least difference in her height. The alteration in the human stature, he supposes, proceeds from the yielding of the cartilages between the vertebrae, to the weight of the body in an erect posture:

• STRIKING FATE OF GUILT.

THREE inhabitants of Balck, travelled together. They found a treasure, and divided it equally amongst them. They continued their journey, and entertained each other with their different schemes of employing the riches which they had thus suddenly acquired. The provisions which they had along with them were consumed: they, therefore, agreed that one of them should go to a town and buy some, and that the youngest should execute that commission. He accordingly went.

As he was upon the road he said to himself, "Now, indeed, I am rich; but I should have been much richer had I been alone when the treasure was found. These two men have carried off two thirds of my riches. Cannot I fall upon a way of recovering them? That, I think, may be very easy. I have only to poison the provision which I am going to buy, and on my return to say that I have dined in the town. My companions will eat without suspicion, and die. I shall then have the whole of the treasure."

In the mean time, the two other travellers conferred together in these terms: "We had little occasion for this young fellow's company at such a juncture. We have been obliged to give him a share of the treasure. His part of it would have increased ours, and we had been very truly rich. He will be back to us soon. We have good poniards."

The young man returned with the poisoned provisions. His companions assassinated him: they then ate and died, and none of the three enjoyed the treasure.

The Will's Nunchian.

HOGARTH'S LAST WORK.

A FEW months before Hogarth was seized with the malady which deprived society of one of its brightest ornaments, he proposed to his matchless pencil the work he has entitled the "Tail Piece." The first idea of this picture is said to have been started in company, while the convivial glass was circulating round his own table. "My next undertaking," said Hogarth, "shall be the end of all things."—"If that is the case," replied his friends, "your business will be finished, for there will be an end of the painter."—"There will be so," answered Hogarth, sighing heavily; "and therefore the sooner my work is done the better." Accordingly he began the next day, and continued his design with a diligence that seemed to indicate an apprehension he should not live to complete it. This, however, he did, and in the most ingenious manner, by grouping every thing that could denote the end of all things:—a broken bottle; an old broom worn to the stump; the butt-end of an old musket; a cracked bell; a bow unstrung; a crown tumbled in pieces; towers in ruins; the sign-post of a tavern called the World's End falling down; the moon in her wane; the map of the globe burning; a gibbet falling, the body gone, and the chains which held it dropping down; Phœbus and his horses lying dead in the clouds; a vessel wrecked; Time, with his glass and scythe broken; a tobacco-pipe with the last whiff of smoke going out; a play-book opened, with "exeat omnes" stamped in the corner; an empty purse: and a statute of bankruptcy taken out against Nature. "So far so good," said Hogarth, on reviewing his performance; "nothing remains but this;" taking his pencil, and sketching the resemblance of a painter's palette broken. "Finis!" he then exclaimed, "the deed is done; all is over." It is a very remarkable fact, and not generally known, that Hogarth never again took the palette in his hand,

nd that he died in about a month after he had finished this Tail Piece.

WITTY SAYINGS,

COLLECTED BY LORD BACON.

ALONSO, King of Arragon, used to say, in commendation of old age, Old wood is best to burn; old wine to drink; old friends to trust; and old authors to read."

Ann Boleyn, as she was led to the block, desired one of the king's privy chamber, attending her execution, to commend her to the king; and to tell him, he had been constant in his advancing her, viz:—from a private gentlewoman to a marchioness; from a marchioness to a queen; and now, having it not in his power to confer a higher degree of earthly honour, he crowns my innocence with martyrdom.

A parcel of boys, going from a boarding school to hunt rabbits, agreed to be silent, for fear of scaring them; but one of the scholars, supposing they could not be scared by hearing a tongue they did not understand, cried out, as soon as he saw them, "Ece cuculi!" i. e. behold the rabbits! at which they immediately fled into their burrows. And, when his companions rebuked his folly, the wise lad replied, "Who would have thought that the rabbits understood Latin?"

SCOTCH BULL.—In the account of the landing of the King at Leith, as published in *The Morning Chronicle* 1822, was the following passage:—"When the King set his foot upon the land, there was a general moving of hats and handkerchiefs; and though the cries of 'welcome' were by no means either numerous or loud, there was that in the general appearance of the people which shewed that they felt far more than they could express. We observed them in various places turn round to each other, and without ever uttering a word, say, with the most powerful expression, 'We have got the king at last!'"

NO JOKE.—A gentleman, residing on his estate on the road to Dorking,

and within a few miles of that town, finding his grounds trespassed on and robbed, set up a board in a most conspicuous situation, to scare offenders by the notification that—"Steel traps and spring-guns are set in these grounds;" but finding that even this was treated with contempt, and his fruit, &c. vanished as before, he caused to be painted in very prominent letters underneath—"No JOKE, BY GOD!" which we are told, had the desired effect."

A gentleman passing through Fleet Market, was surprised at being hailed from the well-known college by a friend, who it appeared was in durance vile. "Ah! Tom, why how came you there?" asked the gentleman. "O! a very rascally piece of business; I am imprisoned for telling a lie."—"For telling a lie; impossible! there must be some mistake."—"No, it's true enough. I promised to pay my tailor's bill, and I didn't!"

LOSS OF CHARACTER.—"Sir," observed a publican of Doncaster, to a man, notorious for never speaking the truth, "you have taken away my character."—"How so?" said the other; "I never mentioned your name in my life."—"No matter for that," replied Boniface; "before you came here I was reckoned the greatest liar in the place."

CHEERFUL DIVINE.—A very worthy clergyman, affectionately attached to his family, was asked by a friend, if his daughter, who was known to be near her confinement, was yet put to bed. "Yes," replied the doctor, "I thank you, she is."—"And what is the result?"—"Why, my dear sir," returned the cheerful divine, "she has had her labor for her pains."

WHISTON.—The celebrated Whiston dining with Lady Jekyll, sister to Lord Somers, she asked him why God Almighty made woman out of the rib? Whiston, after reflecting a moment, replied, "Indeed, my lady, I don't know; except it was because the rib is the crookedest part of the body."

Poetry.

HENRY AND ELLEN.

AN IDYLLION.

As Henry, amorous shepherd, sung
Ellen, the beautiful and young,
"Cease," said the nymph, "let virtue's
praise

Adorn and elevate thy lays;
The tuneful muses were design'd
To raise and purify the mind,
Paint the fair feelings of the heart,—
Candour that scorns ignoble art,
Simplicity devoid of guile,
Pity's soft eye, and Mercy's smile;
Nor let the rhyme for ever run,
Sacred to Venus and her son."

The obedient shepherd told how fair
The native smiles of Virtue were,
And how her heavenly smiles impart
Ecstatic rapture to the heart.
"Mild," he sung, "as orient day,
And beauteous as the bloom of May,
She moves with grace, and speaks with
ease,

For nature form'd the fair to please;
Loose flow her tresses to the gale
The loveliest virgin of the vale."
The gamesome shepherds laughed, and
said,

"Yes, Virtue is a lovely maid,
And, strange to tell, we oft have seen
The goddess dancing on the green;
Henry even now perceives the fair,
Why else his warm impassioned air?
Why else the flames that fire his eye,
Lost voice, and pulses beating high?"
Ellen blushed lovelier than the rose
That with the dewy morning blows,
And conscious would have frowned in
vain.

A smile surprised her; and again
She blushed, and would have frowned;
but still

The sportive traitors of her will—
Unbidden smiles the nymph betrayed,
And with her frowns and blushes played.
"Mistaken boy," she cried, "away,
Nor venture on the moral lay;
Fit minstrel of the Italian grove,
Go, sing of Venus and of love."
The disconcerted shepherd sigh'd,
And to the blushing maid replied,
"Tis said or sung, would Virtue deign
In moral guise to visit men,
Glowing with elegant desire,
All that beheld her would admire;
With this opinion I agree,
For, Ellen, she would smile like thee,

Like thee would sweetly muse thy bloom,
Thy form, and features would assume;
Would mildly censure if my lay
In beauty's praise should go astray,
To me, transported with my theme,
Already ye appeared the same:
Shepherds, be candid, was I far to
blame?"

OUT OF SPIRITS.

"Is my wife out of spirits?" said John,
with a sigh,
As her voice of a tempest gave warning;
"Quite out, sir, indeed," said her maid
in reply,
"For she finish'd the brandy this
morning."

AN EXPOSTULATION.

When late I attempted your pity to move,
Why seem'd you so deaf to my pray'rs?
Perhaps it was right to dissemble your
love,
But—why did you kick me down stairs?

TRUE BENEVOLENCE.

The other day says Ned to Joe,
(Near Bedlam's confines groping).
"Whene'er I hear the cries of woe
My hand is always open."

"I own," says Joe, "that to the poor
(You prove it every minute),
Your hand is open, to be sure,
But then there's nothing in it."

DANDIES.

Dandies, to make a greater show,
Wear coats stuck out with pads and
puffing;
And this is surely a-propos,
For what's the goose without the stuffing?

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We should be glad to admit H. Jernel's communications, but wish to know what authority he has for the authenticity of the one in which he speaks of the manners of a certain people.

H—y's anecdotes safely arrived.

No communications will be received unless post paid.

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THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 6.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.

HOW TO CHOOSE A QUEEN.

BACON, in his history of the Reign of Henry VII. Fol. 1629, p. 219, says, "When the King was ancient (anno 1505) he had thoughts of marrying the young Queen of Naples, and sent three ambassadors, with curious and exquisite instructions for taking a survey of her person, complexion, &c." These instructions were printed about sixty years ago, by a descendant of Braybroke, one of the ambassadors; and as they fully answer the description given of them by Lord Bacon, they are here reprinted for the amusement of the readers of the NIC-NAC. Had such directions been issued on a similar occasion, some eight and twenty years ago, much unhappy dissention might probably have been avoided. As it is, they may serve for models on any future embassy of the kind being set on foot; and possess a peculiar interest at this period, when rumours of a royal marriage are becoming every day more prevalent.

TRUTH.

"Instructions, given by the King's Highness, to his trusty and well-beloved Servants, Fraunceys Marsin, James Braybroke, and John Stile, showing howe they shall ordre themselves, when they come to the presence of the old Quene of Naples, and the young Queene hir daughter.

1. First. After presentacion and delyverance of such lettres as they shall have with theym, to be delivered to the said Quenes, from the Ladie Kateryn, Princesse of Wales, making hir recommendacion and declaracion of such charges and words as shall be shewed and committed unto theym by the said Princesse, to be opened and declared on hir behalf to the said Quenes, they shall well note and marke th' estat that they keepe, and howe

they be accompanied with nobles and ladies.

2. Item. To take good hede, and marke th' estats that the said Quenes kepe; and whether they kepe their estats and housolds apart, or in oon house togedres; and howe they be accompanied, and what lords and ladies they have aboute theym.

3. Item. If it shall fortune the King's said servants to fynde the said Quenes keping their estats togedres, they shall well and assuredly note and marke the maner of keping and ordering theym in their estats; with the countenance and maner of every of theym; and suche answer as they shall make, upon the speeche and communicacion as they shall have with them at the delyverance of the said lettres, and declaracion of th' other matiers before mencioned; and to marke hir discrecion, wisdom, and gravitie, in hir said communicacion and answer in every behalf.

4. Item. They shall, in like wise, endeavor theyme to understand whether the yong Quene speke any other languages than Spaynasae or Italyon; and whether she can speke Frenche or Laten.

5. Item. Specially to marke and note well the age and stature of the said yong Quene, and the feturys of hir bodye.

6. Item. Specially to marke the favor of her visage, whether she be paynted or not, and whether it be fatte or leene, sharpe or rownde; and whether hir countenance be chierfull and amiable, frowning or malincolyous, stedefast or light, or blushing in communicacion.

7. Item. To note the clearnesse of hir skynne.

8. Item. To note the colour of hir here.

9. Item. To note well hir ies, browes, teethe, and lippes.

10. Item. To marke well the fassion of hir nose and the heithe and bredthe of hir foreheade.

11. Item. Specially to note hir complexion.

12. Item. To marke hir armes, whether they bee grete or smale, long or shorte.

13. Item. To see hir hands bare, and to note the fassion of theym, whether the palme of her hande be thikke or thynne, and whether hir hands bee fatte or leene, long or shorte.

14. Item. To note hir fyngers, whether they bee longe or shorte, smale or grete, brode or narrowe before.

15. Item. To marke whether hir nekke be longe or shorte, smale or grete.

16. Item. To marke hir breasts and pappes, whether they be bigge or smale.

17. Item. To marke whether ther appeare any here aboutt hir lippes or not.

18. Item. That they endeavor theym to speke with the said yong Quene fasting, and that she may telle unto theym some matier at length, and to approche as nere to hir mouth as they honestly maye, to th' entent that they may fele the condicion of hir brethe, whether it be swete or not; and to marke at every time when they speke with her, if they fele any savor of spices, rose-waters, or muske, by the brethe of hir mouth, or not.

19. Item. To note the height of hir stature, and to enquire whether she were any slippars, and of what height her slippars bee, to th' entent they bee not decayed in the veray height and stature of her; and, if they may come to the sight of hir slippars, then to note the fashion of hir foote.

20. Item. To enquire whether she have any sekenesse of hir nativite, or deformitie or blemmyshe in hir bodye, and what that shuld bee; or, whether she hath been communely in helthe, or sometyme seke and sometyme hole; and, to know the specialities of such diseases and sekenesse.

21. Item. Whether she be in any

singular favor with the King of Arragon, hir uncle; and whether she have any resemblance in visage, countenance, or complexion to him.

22. Item. To enquire of the manor of hir diet; and, whether she bee a grete fedar or drynker; and, whether she useth often to ete and drynke; and, whether she drynketh wyne, or water, or bothe.

23. Item. The King's said servants shall also, at their comyng to the partes of Spayne, diligently enquire for some conynge paynter, having good experience in making and paynting of visages and portretures; and, suche oon they shall take with theym to the place wher the said Quenes make their abode, to th' entent that the said paynter maye drawe a picture of the visage and semblance of the said yong Quene, as like unto hir as it can or may bee conveniently doon; whieh picture and image they shall substantially note and marke in every pointe and circumstance, soo that it agree in similitude and likeness, as near as it may be possible, to the very visage, countenance, and semblance of the said Quene; and, in case they may perceyve that the paynter, at the first or second making thereof, hath not made the same parfaite to hir similitude and likeness, or that he hath omitted any feture or circumstance, either in colours or other proporcions of the said visage, then they shall cause the same paynter, or some other the most conyng paynter that they can gete, soo often times to renewe and reforme the same picture, till it be made parfaite, and agreeable in every behalfe with the very image and visage of the said Quene.

24. Item. The King's said servants, by the wisest wayes that they can use, shall make inquisition, and enserche, what land or livelihood the said yong Quene hath, or shal have, afre the decesse of hir mother, either by the title of jointer, or otherwise, in the realme of Naples, or in any other place or contraye; what is the yerely value thereof, and whether she shall have the same to hir and hir heires for ever, or ells during hir lif

only: and to knowe the specialities of the title and value thereof, in every behalfe as nere as they shall knowe.

ANSWERS.

To the 6th Article.—As to this Article, as farre as that we can persayve or know, the said Quene ys not paynted; and the favore of hir visage ys after hir stature, of a verrey good compas, and amyabille, and somewhat round and fatte, and the countenance chierfull and not frowneyng; and stedfast; and not lizght nor boldehardy in speche, but with a demewre womanly, shamefast countenance; and of fewe words, as that we coude persayve; as we thynke that she uttered the fewer words, by cause that the Quyn hir moder was present, the whiche had all the sayengs; and the yonge Quyn satte as demoure as a mayden, and sometyme talkeynge with the ladies that satte about hir, with a womanly lawzgbeynge (laughing) chere and countenance.

To the 9th Article.—As to this Article, the eies of the said Quyn be of colore browne, somewhat grayeshe; and hir browes of a browne here, and very small, like a wyre of here.

To the 10th Article.—As to this Article, the fashion of hir nose ys a littell riseyng in the mydward, and a little comeynge or bowyng towards the end; and she is much lyke-nosid unto the Quyne her moder.

To the 13th Article.—As to this Article, we sawe the hande of the said Quyn bare, at thre sondry tymes that we kyssed hir said hands; whereby we persayvyd the said Quyn to be rizghte faire handyd; and, accordyng unto hir personage, they be somewhat full and softe, and faire and clene skynned.

To the 16th Article.—As to this Article, the said Quynes breasts be somewhat grete and full; and, inas-muche that they were trussid somewhat highe, after the maner of the contrey, the whiche causith hir grace to seme muche the fullyer, and hir necke to be the shorter.

To the 17th Article.—As to this Article, as farre as that we can persayve and see, the said Quyn hath

no here aporeynge abowte hir lippes, nor mowthe; but, she ys very clere-skynned.

To the 18th Article.—As to this Article, we cowde never come unto the speiche of the said Quyn fasteyng; wherefore, we cowde nor myghte not attayne to knowliche of that part of this Article. Notwithstondeyng, at such oder tymes as we have spoken and have had communication with the said Quyne, we have aproched as nyghe unto hir visage as that we conveniently myght do, and we cowde fele no savor of any spices or waters; and we thynke verely, by the favor of hir visage, and cleneneys of hir complexion and mowthe, that the said Quyn ys lyke for to be of a sweet savor, and well eyred.

To the 19th Article.—We cowde not come by the parfit knowlich of hir heizghte, for as muche as that hir Grace werithe slippers, after the maner of the contrey, whereof we sawe the fashione; the whiche be of six fyngere brede, of heizghte large; and hir foote, after the porporcion of the same, ys butt small.

To the 22d Article.—The said Quyn ys a good feder, and eetes well hir meit twyes on a daye; and drynketh not often; and that she drynketh the most commonly water; and sometime that water ys boyled with synamon; and sometime she drinkith ypocras, but not often."

The English Traveller.

SCILLY ISLANDS.

From the late C. Dibdin's Tour of England.

THE prominences now called the Scilly Islands, are supposed to have been formerly, and most probably were so, an immense range of rocky hills, making altogether but one island; but their vallies having been broken in upon by the sea, little more than their summits at present appear, and, therefore, they are considered as separate islands. This description of their situation will sufficiently shew the danger of navigating through the irregular and uncertain channels which

lead from place to place, from the almost impossible knowledge of the bold and craggy rocks buried under the waves.

The principal islands are called St. Mary's, Agnes, Annet, St. Nicholas, North Welkel, Tean, St. Martin's, Breher, and Sampson. They all boast of a healthy air uninfected by those vapours which diffuse diseases throughout marshy grounds; but the sea fogs are a dreadful annoyance, as they are open to the wind from every quarter; and the air is besides frequently filled with offensive exhalations, which are rendered still more obnoxious by burning sea weed to make kelp. In summer the atmosphere becomes intensely hot by the reflection of the sun from the sand, and in winter, and in stormy weather, the sand is blown about in clouds, to the great inconvenience of all those who are obliged to venture out of doors. I should think it would be reasonable to expect better health in the fens of Lincolnshire than in the islands of Scilly. It is insisted, nevertheless, that the inhabitants have very few diseases, and that they live to a great age. The small pox, however, sometimes makes dreadful havock among them, and they too often fall martyrs to spirituous liquors.

The soil of these islands is too loose and sandy to bear corn in any perfection. Wheat is very rarely seen; barley and rye, nevertheless, grow plentifully, and are of a good quality; oats thrive but indifferently: they have, however, a grain by way of substitute, which they call pillar, and which is produced in large quantities. It is said to make better meal than oats, of which grain it is a species, being the same thing except the husk, and therefore called the naked oat.

They had some time ago but one corn-mill in all these islands, and in this they resemble the inhabitants in the ruder parts of Scotland: for of course necessity brings ingenuity, and ingenuity resources. They have, at many of the houses, hand mills, which consist of two stones about two feet in diameter, and four inches thick, and these are set wider, or closer by

raising or depressing the upper stone, but the process is tedious, and much labour is bestowed for little advantage. They have black cattle and sheep, but as these fatten upon the sea wreck or ore weed, I should suppose the flavour cannot be very delicious. Some of the sheep, however, eat snails, and are therefore held in as high estimation as the famous Sennanard phillock in the west of Cornwall. I think I should like them better if they were fed upon rich grass. I cannot find that they have any goats; if they have not, they are highly negligent of their interest, for the short grass on the rocks, where the sheep dare not venture, would certainly feed goats to advantage, and the kids and the milk would greatly vary and increase their provisions.

They have a prodigious number of rabbits, which chase away all the hares; but this must be owing to bad management, for these different animals might be made to inhabit separate islands. A small bird called the hedge chicken is found here constantly, and is said to be as delicious as an ortolan. Partridges have been brought over, and they increase pretty well. Wild fowl, from the snipe to the swan, are killed in great plenty. Sea birds, especially puffins, are very numerous, and, in this, these rocks resemble the Isle of Man and the Isle of Wight; but these birds are of a fishy and disagreeable taste. To make amends, however, they have every sort of tame poultry in great perfection.—(Continued on page 50)

Interesting Varieties.

THE DYING INFANT.

THE taper was just glimmering in the socket, as the weary and sorrowful mother awaked from a momentary slumber, to renew her anguish: she turned her eyes on her expiring infant, whose dim orbs were slowly turning in their hollow abodes. It was midnight, and nothing was heard but the strokes of the clock pendulum, and the heavy sighs of a disconsolate father, which mingled with the short deep breath of his suffering darling.

Half raised, and leaning on his pillow, he had been watching the dread moment when a sigh or a struggle should announce that hope and life had together taken their everlasting flight. A sudden flutter drew the attention of the wretched parents from the melancholy object of their meditation: it was the expiring innocent's favorite bird, whose food had been neglected ever since the danger of its little admirer had absorbed all other care, and, as the sad presage of its fate, it now expired!

The parents looked alternately at each other, and on the bird; but at this instant, to add to their distress, the candle ceased to burn,—the father seized his infant's hand—the mother felt for its forehead, but the pulse was still, and all was cold!

INGENIOUS IDEA.

ABOUT fifty years since, two young fellows, brothers, went to Jamaica. They were by trade blacksmiths. Finding, soon after their arrival, that they could do nothing without a little money to begin with; but that, with sixty or eighty pounds, they might be able, with industry, to make a fortune, they hit upon the following novel and ingenious expedient. One of them stripped the other naked, shaved him close, and blackened him from head to foot. This being done, he took him to one of the negro-dealers, who, after viewing and approving his stout athletic appearance, advanced eighty pounds for him, and prided himself on the purchase, supposing him to be one of the finest negroes on the island. The same evening, this newly manufactured negro made his escape to his brother, washed himself clean, and resumed his former appearance. Rewards were in vain offered; pursuit was eluded; and discovery, by care and precaution, rendered impracticable. The brothers commenced business with the money; and actually returned to England with a fortune of several thousand pounds. Previous, however, to their departure from the island, they waited

upon the person from whom they had received the money; and, recalling the circumstance of the negro to his recollection, paid him the principal and interest, with thanks.

KIT.

● ECCENTRIC HOSPITALITY.

DURING the American war, a soldier, who had been wounded and honourably discharged (but, perhaps, not paid), being destitute and benighted, knocked at the door of an Irish farmer, when the following dialogue ensued:—

Patrick.—And who the devil are you, now?

Soldier.—My name is John Wilson.

Patrick.—And where the devil are you going from, John Wilson?

Soldier.—From the American army at Erie, sir.

Patrick.—And what in the devil's name do you want here?

Soldier.—I want shelter to night: will you permit me to spread my blanket on your floor, and sleep to night?

Patrick.—Devil take me if I do, John Wilson—that's flat.

Soldier.—On your kitchen floor, sir?

Patrick.—No, not I, by the Hill o'Howth—that's flat.

Soldier.—In your stable then?

Patrick.—I'm d—d if I do that either—that's flat.

Soldier.—I'm dying with hunger; give me but a bone and a crust—I ask no more.

Patrick.—The devil blow me if I do, sir—that's flat.

Soldier.—Give me some water to quench my thirst, I beg of you.

Patrick.—Beg and be hanged, I'll do no such thing—that's flat.

Soldier.—Sir, I have been fighting to secure the blessings you enjoy: I have assisted in contributing to the glory and welfare of the country which has hospitably received you, and can you so inhospitably reject me from your house?

Patrick.—Reject you! who in the devil's name talked a word about rejecting you? May be I am not the scurvy spalpeen you take me to be, John Wilson. You asked me to

let you lie on my floor, my kitchen floor, or in my stable; now, by the powers, d'ye think that I'd let a perfect stranger do that, when I have half a dozen soft feather beds all empty? No, by the Hill o' Howth, John—that's flat. In the second place, you told me you were dying with hunger, and wanted a bone and a crust to eat; now, honey, d'ye think I'll feed a hungry man on bones and crust, when my yard is full of fat pullets and turkeys and pigs? No, by the powers, not I—that's flat. In the third place, you asked me for some simple water to quench your thirst; now, as my water is none of the best, I never give it to a poor traveller without mixing it with plenty of wise, brandy, whiskey, or something else wholesome and cooling. Come into my house, my honey; devil blow me, but you shall sleep in the best feather bed I have; you shall have the best supper and breakfast that my farm can supply, which, thank the Lord, is none of the worst: you shall drink as much water as you choose, provided you mix it with plenty of good wine or spirits, and provided also you prefer it. Come in, my hearty, come in, and feel yourself at home. It shall never be said, that Patrick O'Flaherty treated a man scurvily who has been fighting for the dear country which gave him protection—that's flat.

LIFE'S ARITHMETIC.

THAT the world's but a round of Arithmetic's Rules,

Is an old and a just observation;
Since there's plenty of blockheads, and
cyphers, and fools,

In the table of life's NUMERATION.

Thus, as soon as, in youth, we begin to
set sail,

We are apt to outlive our condition;
Whilst fashions, and follies, and vices prevail,

Just to make up a sum of ADDITION.

Then with dece, and with beautiful women and tall,

And with horses of figure and action.
We soon find to our cost, without teaching at all,

That we well know the rule of SUBTRACTION.

Next, married; we've plenty of business to do,

For a wife makes a strange alteration,
With her dresses, and pins, and her pin-money too;

And thus we reach MULTIPLICATION.

And, though there's much talk of the joys of a wife,

Yet conjugal bliss is a vision;

For, no sooner the parties are settled for life,

Than they work up a sum in DIVISION.

Still, there's one rule will serve us wherever we go,

That has stood from the day of creation;
'Tis to practice what's proper, as far as we know,

And the proof of it's self-approbation.

PLYMOUTH DOCK.

T. G.

The Wit's Nunchion.

PROFESSIONAL THIEF.—Lord Mansfield being on the home circuit, a man was brought before him, charged with stealing a silver taddle. In the course of the evidence, the counsel for the crown dwelt rather sarcastically upon the prisoner's being an attorney. "O, brother," says his lordship, in a whisper, "do not make the case worse than it is: if the fellow had been an attorney, you may depend upon it he would have stolen the bowl too."

A YOUNG gentleman having occasion to ask a lady for the snuffers across the table, addressed her in the following strain.—"Most beautiful, accomplished, and charming lady, will your ladyship, by an unmerited and undeserved condescension of your infinite goodness, please to extend to you a most obsequious, devoted, and very humble servant, that pair of ignipotent digests, that I may exasperate the excrescences of this nocturnal cylindric luminary, in order that the refulgent brightness of its resplendent brilliancy may dazzle the vision of our ocular optics more peatently."

ECONOMY.—A gentleman, who had remarked how magnificently a friend of his lived upon a small income, observed, that with such slender means, to make so respectable a figure, was

much to his credit.—“Yes,” replied a gentleman, “and to the credit of all his tradesmen.”

PHILIP II. having been told that a certain physician had publicly defamed him, and was imprisoned for it, sent his prime-minister to enquire if he had done him any injury. To which the physician replied, ‘Never, in all my life.’ This report being made to the king, he ordered the doctor to be immediately set at liberty. The premier, surprised at this conduct, begged to know his majesty’s motive, ‘I do it,’ said the king, ‘because the man must be a fool; for no one else would so outrageously abuse a person who had never injured him; and why should I punish an idiot?’

THE retort courteous was fully experienced by the celebrated counsel-er Jack Lee, on the northern circuit; for, being engaged in cross-examining one Mary Prichard, of Barnsley, he began with, “Well, Mary, if I may credit what I hear, I may venture to address you by the name of Black Moll.”—“Faith may you, master lawyer,” said she; “for I am always called so by the blackguards.”

THE accomplished Lucius Cary, Lord Falkland, in Charles I’s reign, was admitted very young a member of the House of Commons, where he distinguished himself greatly by his eloquence. But being proposed as a member of a committee, he was opposed by some of the old Senators, who observed, that he had not yet sown his wild oats. To this he answered, “Then it will be best to sow them here, where there are so many geese to pick them up.”

BENEVOLENCE ITS OWN REWARD.—It is said of Boulter (a better sort of highwayman), that, one day riding on horseback along the high road, he met a young woman who was weeping, and who appeared to be in great distress. Touched with compassion, he asked what was the cause of her affliction; when she told him, with-

out knowing who he was, that a creditor attended by a bailiff had gone to a house which she pointed out, and had threatened to take her husband to prison for a debt of thirty guineas. Boulter gave her the sum, telling her to go and pay the debt, and set her husband at liberty; and she ran off loading the honest gentleman with benedictions. Boulter, in the mean time, waited on the road till he saw the creditor come out; he then attacked him, and took back the thirty guineas, besides every thing else he had about him.

Quick, the comedian, one day passing through Broker Row, Moorfields, was seized upon by a barker of a furniture warehouse, who, without ceremony, pulled him into the shop, and began puffing off his tables and chairs. Quick, being old and infirm, made little resistance, but asked the man if he were master of the shop? “No, sir,” said the barker, “but I will fetch him immediately.” The man returned with his master, to whom he put the same question. “Are you master of the shop, sir?”—“Yes, sir, what can I do for you?”—“Only,” replied Quick, “just hold your man a minute, while I go out!”

A CERTAIN lord, taking a walk with a gentleman near a country village, saw a poor boy dragging a calf with both his hands. “You shall see I’ll make the boy loose his calf,” said my lord, laughing, and supposing the boy would have pulled off his hat to him. Being disappointed, he said, “Sirrah, don’t you see me, that you keep your hat on?”—“An’t please your lordship,” replied the boy, “to hold my calf, I’ll pull it off, but at present you see I have my hands full.”

IT was a fine saying of Lord Russel, who was beheaded in the reign of Charles II.; when on the scaffold, he delivered his watch to Dr. Gilbert Burnet, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury. “Here, sir,” said he, “take this, it shows TIME; I am going into ETERNITY, and shall have no further occasion for it.”

CONUNDRUMS.

THERE is a very dexterous manoeuvre, which is frequently practised by poets, and other writers, viz. to enumerate in their prefaces the various objections which may be urged against their productions, and thus disarm the severity of criticism, by throwing themselves upon its mercy, and acknowledging their errors before hand. Moore seems to have carried this idea to its utmost extent in his "Lalla Rookh," where a regular course of criticism on the work is furnished at intervals during its progress, by one of the characters. I mention all this, in order that I may not be deemed insensible to the trifling and frivolous nature of the very best of such things as Conundrums. I am not, however, without my hopes, that these, which are partly new and partly old, may pass muster amongst the light reading so much in vogue at this period of the year, and contribute some amusement to the lovers of fun. At any rate, the reproach of "great cry, and little wool," will not apply to this article, since I have been careful so to prepare the minds of my readers, that they may feel the force of that excellent benediction, "Blessed are they who expect nothing, for they shall not be disappointed."

In conclusion, it may be remarked, that a Conundrum, to be very good, ought to be very BAD: that is, the more far-fetched and extravagant it may be, the more calculated it is to produce the desired effect—a laugh.

RIGDUM FUNIDOS.

1. Why is a clergyman unlikely to be an impartial dramatic critic?

Because he has taken orders.

2. Why is it advisable to cultivate the friendship of a knock-kneed man?

Because, "a friend IN-KNEED is a friend indeed."

3. What snuff-taker is that, whose box gets fuller the more snuff he takes?

A pair of snuffers.

4. Why is a pig like the letter N?

Because he makes a sty nasty.

5. Why are gormandizers particularly averse to annual parliaments?

Because they have a great dislike to short Commons.

6. Why is an egg over-done, like an egg under-done?

Because it is HARDLY done.

7. In what respect does a bad governess chiefly differ from a good one?

The one guides miss; the other misguides.

8. Why does opening a letter, resemble a strange way of getting into a room?

Because 'tis breaking through the sealing?

9. Why is a cautious tradesman like a student in divinity?

Because he studies the prophets.

10. Why is a person who lays wagers, a more worthy man than he who does not?

Because he's a better.

11. Why are Lord P.'s trowsers like two French towns?

Because they are too long (Toulon); and too loose (Tholouse).*

12. Why is a dandy like a haunch of venison?

Because he's a bit of a buck.

13. Why is a resurrection man a very estimable character?

Because he rescues his fellow creatures from the grave.

14. Why is a tavern waiter like a race horse?

Because he runs for the plate.

15. Why is a spectator like a beehive?

Because he is a be-holder.

FRISK.

(Continued on page 64.)

* A gentleman who proposed this Conundrum in a party, thus improved the answer,—Because they are too long, and too short!

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We cannot refrain from again expressing our grateful thanks to our friend, TRUTH, for his generous assistance, which, we trust, our attention will induce him to continue.

J. B.'s article will be inserted in our next number.

We have received numerous letters from Correspondents in the course of the week, which are "laid upon the shelf," and we again state, that—

No communications will be received unless post paid.

Second Edition.

THE NIC-NAC:

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 7.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.

WE have unwillingly delayed the appearance of the following letter from a correspondent, owing to our having mislaid it, but have now (although the writer has taken upon himself to comment rather severely on our editorial discrimination), given it a place in our work, because we find that he is equally liberal in his commendations to those whom we ourselves delight to honor.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NIC-NAC.

Mr. Editor, Mr. Nic-Nac, or Mr. Publisher (whichever title suits thee; perhaps these three single gentlemen rolled into one—or, as Mrs. Malaprop has it, "like Cerberus, three gentlemen at once"),—what, in the name of Fortune, could induce you to insert the silly story called the "Fortunate Discovery," in your entertaining publication, p. 17? I am by no means averse to the encouragement of juvenile talent, or incipient literary genius, but a thing so utterly absurd, and even ungrammatical, so destitute of plot or incident, as the narrative of Sir Joseph Philipps and the fair, or rather the FRAIL, Angelica, has not the smallest claim on the attention or indulgence of your readers. I wonder the more at this worse than useless occupation of your pages, when they can be filled by such able contributors as the writer on Roads and Inns (who, I trust, has not ended his labours at the conclusion of those articles), and your other powerful auxiliary, under the signature of TRUTH.

By the way, I would make bold to send my respects to this last-mentioned correspondent, being a personage for whom I have always had a very great respect—though I had been led to believe Truth was of the feminine gender: but as he is in the habit of "stowing away a glass of grog" (a seafaring man mayhap), my compliments, if presented at a moment of exhilaration, might unfortunately not be received with that sober steady-

ness, that upright and strait-forward sort of demeanour, which I have been taught to venerate and admire, as the peculiar attributes of this celebrated character.

It is true, that I understood Truth had a glass wherein the real appearance of things was shown, but little dreamt, that what I conceived to be a mirror or speculum, was simply a GLASS OF GROG, since it is not by glasses of this kind that the clearest reflections are generally produced.

Still, I grant, there is a powerful reason, or, at least, a satisfactory excuse, for this diurnal indulgence, to which he is accustomed, as, by his own account, his lodging is at the bottom of a well, where he must indeed require something warm and sheering, to soften the asperities of the atmospheric influences at a time like the present, when even the genial comforts of a Romford stove, Turkey carpet, and air-tight door and windows, are scarcely adequate to protect us common mortals from the attacks of severe cold and intense frost.

Even at this moment, Mr. Editor, the thought of such a dwelling-place thrills my very marrow; an icy chillness spreads rapidly over my whole frame, cramping my extremities to such a degree, as almost to deny my pen the power of expression, in consequence of the paralyzed state of my digitals, vulgarly called fingers. I shall, therefore, hasten to a conclusion, by transcribing you a few particulars relative to Northumberland

House, the noble mansion of the Percy family, which has lately been thoroughly repaired and beautified, and, probably, an account of its origin may, therefore, be acceptable to your readers. *

NORTHUMBERLAND HOUSE

Stands on the site of the hospital of St. Mary Rouncival. Henry the Eighth granted it to Sir Thomas Clarendon. It was subsequently transferred to Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, who, in the time of James the First, built here a house, and called it after his own name. He left it to his kinsman, the Earl of Suffolk, Lord Treasurer, and, by the marriage of Algernon Percy, Earl of Northumberland, with Elizabeth, daughter of Theophilus, Earl of Suffolk, it passed into the family of the present noble owner. The greater part of it was built by an architect named Bernard Janson, in the reign of James the First: the portal, since altered by the late Duke, by a contemporary architect, Gerard Christmas, who left on it his mark, G. C. In this house is the noble picture of the Cornaro family, by Titian.

Nothing can be more confined than the situation. In front it is pent up by a very narrow part of the Strand, and behind, by a cluster of mean houses, coal wharfs, and other offensive objects. There is a drawing of the house (then called Suffolk house), by Hollar, in the Physicians' library, at Cambridge, as is appeared in the early part of the reign of Charles the First. Near the west of Aldersgate, in Bull-and Mouth street, was a city mansion-house of the Earls of Northumberland, likewise Northumberland Abbey, Crutched-friars. Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, having been committed to the Tower, being suspected of conspiring with Throgmorton, the Lord Paget, and the Guises, to invade England, and free the Queen of Scots, was, in the month of June, 1589, found dead in his bed, shot in the body with three bullets, and the door bolted on the inside. The coroner's inquest brought in their verdict—Felo de se.

The English Traveller.

SCILLY ISLANDS.

From the late C. Dublin's Tour through England.

THE islanders of both sexes are comely, civil to strangers, and remarkable for speaking good English. The men are generally seamen, and many of them good pilots. They have fish in great abundance, and they might make an advantage of the pilchard fishery, which begins sooner with them than it does in the bays of Cornwall, but in this they neglect what might prove a profitable speculation, and content themselves with merely providing for their own necessities. It is very proper to give a description of their making kelp, which seems to be their staple commodity. This is done from the alga marina fucus, called also the sea wreck or ore weed, which grows on all the islands in great plenty. The business is carried on in June and July, for after that time they are cautious of impoverishing the roots, and therefore they leave them undisturbed till the next year. There are several sorts of this alga marina, but they are rendered equally useful, and by the same process. Each island has its proper limits assigned for gathering it. They load their boats on the shelves or ledges of the rock when the sea has left them, and when they return they lay it on the beach to dry, after which it is turned and cocked like hay.

This done, a circular shelving pit is made in the sand, seven feet in diameter, and three feet deep. This pit is lined with stones, to prevent the sand from mixing with the kelp; a small bush of lighted furze is next placed at the bottom of the pit, and some of the driest ore weed laid on it. As it gains strength, it is fed with more ore weed; the fire at length becomes very strong, and when it appears in bright embers it is mixed and stirred with iron rakes till it begins to run, soon after which it turns into imperfect glass. When it becomes cold, it is fit for various purposes, being used to make alum, soap, and other things; but its principal use is as an ingredient

in the composition of glass. The value of five hundred pounds was received in the year 1751 for melted ore weed, and I am informed the income is now nearly doubled. There is nothing extraordinary in the quality of this fucus when reduced to ashes, for all vegetables turn into an alkalious fixed salt. Its other quality certainly is of infinite consequence, which, however, is very easily understood, for the sandy particles minute to infinity, which it imbibes through its pores, are the cause of vitrification.

Though I have been little accustomed to notice the particulars of corporate regulations at different places, I shall speak concisely of the government of these islands, which is carried into effect by twelve of the principal inhabitants, who meet once a month to determine all material disputes; those of a trifling nature are never enquired into, and for a good reason: these twelve judges being very little versed in the intricacies of litigation, and their authority being too weak to enforce obedience. In criminal cases the military are called in, and martial law enforced; but as these people have few temptations to distress others, and great need to keep their own, which, after all, is little enough, every man makes himself as contented as he can, and finds it his interest to contribute to the comfort of his neighbours, because it gives him a right to require similar assistance.

I had an extraordinary opportunity of learning, and I have no doubt but my intelligence was authentic, that in cases of shipwreck these islanders are not the brutes we have been taught to consider them. They accomplish wonders to save the lives of distressed sailors, and restore most scrupulously the property of all those who have been preserved from destruction. As to other valuables, they constantly look upon them as their own, but their equity in the distribution of these is exemplary: those who have been most active in assisting the crews and passengers being awarded the largest share, and so on in proportion to the succour that has been afforded; but no one dares to arrogate a reward

who has not been actively instrumental towards the preservation that has been given.

The person from whom I had this information, and whose history I shall shortly give you, happened to be at St. Mary's Island at the time when the imprudent and unfortunate Mrs. Cargill was cast away. The accident was entirely occasioned by carelessness; for the steersman, instead of keeping the vessel at a proper distance from the land, ran her upon one of those shelves or ledges, which I have described as so dangerous, and she instantly upset! and as this was in the dead of the night, every inmate, of course, except those upon deck, as in the case of the Royal George, was overwhelmed and drowned. All the bodies were found in their beds and hammocks; Mrs. Cargill was discovered with her child in her arms, and the captain by her side. These three were buried in one grave, and the remainder of the victims were instantly deposited in the earth.

The vessel lying in the shelf, the whole cargo was saved, and, as the islanders, for the trouble of lending their assistance, conceived themselves entitled to the private property of the deceased as their lawful plunder, a cording to immemorable usage, the women partitioned among them the stage dresses, shawls, muslins, and other finery, which Mrs. Cargill had brought over with her, part of which they sold, and dressed themselves out with the rest. My informant shewed me some shawls and other articles he had bought for his sisters, and he assured me there was such a profusion of gay things, that the fish women and gatherers of ore weed went to church as fine as tragedy queens.

The surviving part of the crew blamed the captain for the accident; and though they loved him, did not spare to say, that if he had not been so fond of his lady, but had watched upon deck, which in that situation was his duty, and have kept a good look out, instead of trusting to a drunken pilot they should have been all safe. Thus was this wretched wo-

man the syren to these mariners. A prospect of touching English ground had on the evening before the accident, exhilarated all their spirits, and they had sacrificed too freely to their pleasures. All the favorite songs she could recollect, with which she hoped again to lead an applauding public, were voluntarily sung, and the time was contemplated when public favor should again give a zest to private folly; but the reign of thoughtless imprudence was over, and she perished a miserable example of that criminal levity, which, by degrading the mind, throws a veil over beauty, and distorts grace into deformity.—(Continued on page 58.)

Interesting Varieties.

BUTTER.

It has been said, that the English have a thousand religions, and but one sauce. It must be allowed that they use butter with almost every kind of food. Butter, though a good article of diet, may be used too freely, and in this country, I am convinced, that is the case. To weak stomachs it is hurtful, even in small quantities, and, when used freely, it proves prejudicial to the strongest.

Butter, like other things of an oily nature, has a constant tendency to turn racid. This process, by the heat of the stomach, is greatly accelerated, insomuch that many people, soon after eating butter, complain of its rising in their stomachs, in a state highly disagreeable. Oils of every kind are with difficulty mixed with watery fluids. This is the reason why butter floats on the stomach, and rises in such an unpleasant manner.

Persons afflicted with bile, should use butter very sparingly. Some sceptical authors doubt whether or not aliment of any kind has an effect on the bile. One thing, however, is certain, that many patients, afflicted with complaints which were supposed to be occasioned by bile, have been completely cured by a total abstinence from butter.

The most violent bilious complaints

that I ever met with, were evidently occasioned by food that became racid on the stomach, as the cholera morbus, and the like. Nor can such complaints be cured, till the racid matter is totally evacuated by vomiting and purging.

But supposing butter did not possess the quality of becoming racid on the stomach, it may, nevertheless, prove hurtful to digestion. Oils of all kinds are of a relaxing quality, and tend to impede the action of digestion. Hence the custom of giving rich broths and fat meats to persons who have a ferocious appetite.

The free use of butter, and other oily substances, not only tends to relax the stomach, and impede its action, but to induce a debility of the solids, which paves the way to many maladies. In a country where two thirds of the inhabitants lead sedentary lives, a debility of fibre must predominate. Whatever increases that debility, ought to be avoided.

Children, without exception, are disposed to diseases arising from relaxation. Butter, of course, ought to be given to them with a sparing hand. But is this the case? By no means. Bread and butter constitute a great part of the food of children, and I am convinced that the gross humours with which they are frequently troubled, are partly owing to this food. As children abound with moisture, bread alone is, generally speaking, better for them than bread and butter.

I have been astonished to see the quantities of butter eaten by gross women who lead sedentary lives. Their tea-bread is generally contrived so as to suck up butter like a sponge. What quantities of crumpets and muffins they will devour in a morning, soaked with this oil; and afterwards complain of indigestion, when they have eaten what would overload the stomach of a ploughman. Dr. Fothergill is of opinion, that butter produces the nervous or sick head ache, so common among the women of this country. As a proof of this, it is often cured by an emetic.

Oils, in certain quantities, excite

nausea, and even vomiting. They must of course prove unfriendly to digestion. A Dutch sailor, we are told, can digest train oil. So may an English sailor; but it would be very improper food for a London lady.

To some of the leaner farinaceous substances, as the potatoe, and the like, butter makes a very proper addition; but eating it to flesh and fish, of almost every description, is certainly wrong. The flesh eaten in this country is generally fat enough without the addition of butter; and the more oily kinds of fish, as salmon or herrings, are lighter on the stomach, and easier digested, when eaten without it.

Butter is rather a gross food, and fitter for the athletic and laborious, than the sedentary and delicate. It is less hurtful when eaten fresh than salted. Salt butter certainly tends to induce skin diseases, and I am inclined to think, the free use of it at sea may have some share in bringing on that dreadful malady, so destructive to our brave sailors, the sea scurvy.

There is a method of rendering salt butter less hurtful, but it seems not to be known in England. What I mean is, to mix it with an equal quantity of honey, and keep it for use. In this way it may be given to children with greater freedom. In North Britain, this method of mixing butter with honey is well known; and, from a common proverb, I take the custom to be very ancient.

Butter, in itself, is not near so hurtful, as when combined with certain other things. For example: bread made with butter is almost indigestible, and pastries of every kind are little better; yet many people almost live upon pastry, and it is universally given to children. It is little better, however, than poison, and never fails to disorder their stomachs. The fond mother cannot pass a pastry shop, without treating her darling boy with some of the dainties, and then wonders how he gets the cough or cholic.

I have known a man, seemingly in perfect health, who, by eating a penny worth of pastry, as he passed along

the street, was seized with such an asthmatic fit, that he was obliged to be carried home, and nearly lost his life. This occurred whenever he inadvertently ate any thing baked with butter.

Every thing that proves very injurious to health, ought, as far as possible, to be prohibited, by laying a high duty upon it. A duty on pastry would be serving the public in more respects than one. It would save many lives, and lessen some tax on necessaries.

Cheese, as a diet, is likewise injurious to health. It should never be eaten but as a dessert. It occasions constipation, fires the blood, and excites a constant craving for drink. It is very improper for the sedentary, and hardly to be digested even by the athletic.

If men will live on dry bread, poor cheese, salt butter, broiled bacon, and such like parching food, they will find their way to the ale-house, the bane of the lower orders, and the source of half the beggary in the nation.

FATAL CURIOSITY.

AMONGST the many melancholy catastrophes which the unrestrained indulgence of curiosity has produced, few have been attended by more affecting circumstances than those detailed in the following account (extracted from a newspaper of the period) of an affair which took place in the year 1791. The narration is strictly true; and I have been informed that the female victim was a woman of very captivating appearance and manners:—

“A most unhappy affair has occurred on board the Fitzwilliam East-Indianman, just arrived. Mr. R. Dawson and his niece were passengers in the ship from Bengal, having part of the captain's cabin, or round-house, assigned to themselves for accommodation, and lived at the captain's table. The gentleman was a widower, and appeared to be about forty-five years of age, and his niece about thirty; the former had been in the profession of the law, and was reput-

ed to have some fortune, as had the lady, and both were from Yorkshire. On Wednesday morning, the 28th ult. it was currently reported in the ship, that Mr. D. (a cuddy passenger) had, by looking through the keyhole of the door of their apartment, on Tuesday afternoon, discovered them in an improper situation; that he had called another person to be witness of the same; that they alarmed the parties by knocking at the door, and then retired. The affair being universally made known, a reserve took place during dinner, between the gentlemen and the parties; and an explanation was so far gone into, as to convince the latter that their guilt was public. They accordingly soon retired from table, and remained that day and Thursday in their apartment. On Friday morning, the 30th, upon a servant knocking at the door, and not being able to obtain admittance or attention, a suspicion arose, and the gunner was desired to go over the ship's quarter, and look into their apartment, on which he discovered that they had destroyed themselves. The gentleman was found sitting in the quarter gallery, with a fuscé and a pistol, with the latter of which he had shot himself through the head; the lady was lying in the balcony, with a discharged pistol near her, with which she had shattered her head in a shocking manner. They had been dead some time, and it was about seven in the morning when this part of the melancholy business was publicly known in the ship. Their bodies were committed to the deep at mid-day.

"Some letters were found, written by the lady, addressed to several friends and relations: one to the captain, thanking him for his kindness; one to the person whose fatal curiosity had occasioned the discovery, upbraiding him with his cruel officiousness; and one to a gentleman in the same ship, who had paid his addresses to her, assuring him that she esteemed him highly; but declaring, that it never was her intention to impose on him a woman whose conduct had rendered her unworthy of him."

J. B.

A SCOTCH SERMON.

A Scotch minister, returning amongst his parishioners from a general Conference of the Church, observed to them from the pulpit, that the meeting of the pious ministry had said his congregation was the most drunken one in all Scotland, therefore he would give them a word of council, from a text of his owa, namely :—

"The Lord is gude, and his mercies are gude,

But dina be always dram draming."

In the morn when you rise,
After rubbing your eyes,
Ye may then tak' a dram
Of gin or skiddam,*
But dina be always dram draming.

When ten's on the table,
Why sure, if you're able,
Ye may then tak' a dram
Of gin or skiddam,
But dina be always dram draming.

Then before ye set out,
On business about,
Ye may then tak' a dram
Of gin or skiddam,
But dina be always dram draming.

At twelve tap the bottle,
And into your throttle
Ye may sure pour a dram
Of gin or skiddam,
But dina be always dram draming.

By way of beginner,
Before ye tak' dinner,
Ye may then tak' a dram
Of gin or skiddam,
But dina be always dram draming.

After first boiling pot
From your table does trot,
Ye may then tak' a dram
Of gin or skiddam,
But dina be always dram draming.

Before puddings and pies
(After beef) doth arise,
Ye may then tak' a dram
Of gin or skiddam,
But dina be always dram draming.

When all these are over,
To be quite in clover,
Ye may then tak' a dram
Of gin or skiddam,
But dina be always dram draming.

After celery and cheese,
If you study your ease,

* Hollands.

Second Edition.

THE NIC-NAC; OR, ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 8.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 18, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it" — SHAKESPEARE.

GHOST STORIES.

No. I.

A and tain is best for winter;
I have one of ghosts and spirits;—
I'll tell it softly—yon CRITIC shall not hear it.
SHAKESPEARE.

SIR,—As the plan of the NIC-NAC seems to embrace every species of subject, from gay to grave, and from matters of fact to relations smacking of the marvellous, I transmit you the first of a series of Ghost-Stories, which, with your permission, I shall occasionally continue. The subjoined statement possesses, from the respectability of the parties, more claim to attention than such relations generally receive. They, however, who treat all stories of the kind with derision and incredulity, are seldom amongst the wisest of mankind; for, as Southey very justly observes, in his life of Wesley, "Such things may be preternatural, and yet not miraculous; they may be not in the ordinary course of nature, and yet imply no alteration of its laws. And, with regard to the good end which they may be supposed to answer, it would be end sufficient, if sometimes one of those unhappy persons, who, looking through the dim glass of infidelity, see nothing beyond this life, and the narrow sphere of mortal existence; should, from the well-established truth of one such story (trifling and objectless as it might otherwise appear) be led to a conclusion that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in their philosophy."

The relation is given in a letter addressed to the Rev. Mr. Bonwicke, by the Rev. J. Hughes, of Jesus College, Cambridge (editor of *St. Chrysostom of the Priesthood*), dated January 9, 1706:—

"One Mr. Shaw, formerly Fellow of St. John's College, as he was sitting one night by himself, reading, observed his door to open, upon which he turned round, and saw one Mr. Nailor, a fellow collegian, and an intimate friend, who had been dead five years, come into the room, exactly in the same dress and manner as when he was living. Mr. Shaw was at first greatly alarmed, but recollecting himself, he desired him to sit down; upon which Mr. N. drew a chair, and sat by him, and they had a conference of about an hour and a half. He told him that he came to warn him of his death, which would take place soon and suddenly. He mentioned, likewise, several others of St. John's particularly the famous Auchard, who is since dead. Mr. S. asked if he could not give him another visit; he answered, 'No,' alledging that his allotted time was but three days, and that he had others to see, who were at a great distance. Mr. Shaw, having a great curiosity about his present condition, said, 'Mr. N. how is it with you in the other world?' He answered, 'Very well.' Mr. Shaw proceeded, and asked, 'Are any of our old friends with you?' He replied, 'NOT ONE,' which answer, Mr. Shaw said, struck him to the heart. The spectre then seemed to turn into the next room, and so went off. Mr. Shaw sat a considerable time, musing upon what had happened; but it had so much effect upon him, that he next day made his will, and shortly after, being taken with an apoplectic fit while he was reading divine service, he fell out of the desk, and died immediately. He was ever looked upon to be a pious man, and a good scholar, only some objected that he was inclined to melancholy. It is remarkable that he

was a noted enemy to the belief of apparitions, and used always to dispute against them."

BOTTOM OF A WELL,
13th Jan., 1823.

TRUTH.

P. S.—Pray, Mr Editor, present my compliments to your correspondent, who sports a STAR (a nobleman, mayhap), and assure him, that while I feel highly flattered by the complimentary tone in which he hath deigned to notice my trivial doings, I could wish that he had refrained from displaying towards me a piece of incivility, similar to that with which Young Contrast, in the Lord of the Manor, treats Moll Flagon—"He doubts my sex!" To punish his rudeness, I shall, for the present, leave him quite in the dark as to whether I am of the masculine, feminine, or epicine gender. You, Mr. Editor, can bear witness that I make my appearance at various times, in various shapes, and under different denominations.

Your correspondent, however, seems to be a shrewd fellow, and to know what's what. Extremely happy, therefore, shall I be to see him at my "lodging upon the cold ground," a few months hence, to partake of my afternoon's beverage, and concert measures for the welfare of the Nic-Nac; and though he may deem my residence somewhat unsuitable for a winter retreat, I can assure him that he will find it admirably pleasant in the scorching months of July and August. In the meanwhile, to remove the shivering fit, to the infliction of which I appear to have been accessory, I will impart to him the secret of compounding a mixture, which I have found to be an infallible remedy for cramps, shiverings, and depressed spirits:—

Place in a China bowl half a pound of loaf sugar, the juice of two lemons and two Seville oranges, with the peel of one pared very thin; then add thereto half a pint of brandy and a quarter of a pint of rum, and pour upon the whole a pint and a quarter of boiling water.

Plentiful doses of this nectar, repeated at intervals of thirty minutes,

during a long winter's evening, in the company of half a dozen jolly fellows, who have no objection to 'hear the chimes at midnight,' will disperse a whole "congregation of vapours," put to flight legions of blue devils, and free the patient completely from the "heart-ache, with the thousand natural ills that flesh is heir to."

TRUTH.

The English Traveller.

SCILLY ISLANDS.

From the late C. Dillid's tour of England.
Resumed from page 52.

As there is a subject on which it is proper I should treat while I am speaking of the Scilly Islands, I cannot have so good an opportunity as this of exposing its arcana; I mean smuggling; and to do this I must beg your attention, though the digression will be rather long, to those circumstances by which I came at the knowledge of it.

In the summer of 1785, having set myself a task which required a large portion of time, I took my family to a village not far from Southampton, my native place; and, having invited my sister to join us, I spent four months very agreeably between business and pleasure. I had a piano-forte with me, and I took every convenient opportunity to augment my stock of songs, especially as fresh nautical ideas were presenting themselves to my mind, in consequence of jaunts to the Isle of Wight and other similar relaxations. It was my custom in the dusk of the evening to play these songs, and I had frequently remarked, that a decent looking man, who appeared like the master of a vessel, placed himself very attentively by the side of the window. Upon enquiring of the woman of the house what she knew of him, I found he was a man of considerable property in the neighbourhood, and that he had frequently imparted to her the pleasure he had felt in hearing these sea songs, naturally so congenial to his own feelings. On the following evening I invited him into the house, and I found his conversation full of that pithy and pointed remark (illiterate and limited

certainly, but manly and philosophic), which peculiarly characterises the minds of thorough-bred seamen. I congratulated myself upon having this opportunity of mending my nautical knowledge, and did not scruple to avail myself of his offers to accommodate me with his boats or his yacht, whenever I might be inclined to take a trip to the Isle of Wight, or any other place in the neighbourhood.

We found our comforts much improved by this acquaintance. Instead of the mixture of cyder, brandy, alum, and cochineal, which compose three fourths of the port wine drunk at inns throughout this kingdom, I found myself in possession of genuine claret, Burgundy, and rich Nantz. We had, besides, foreign fruits, and other delicacies, all which he seemed very willing to sell for a song: but, as this would not do with me, I pressed him to state the price of these articles, saying, that otherwise I must refuse to take them. Driven into this corner, and under the necessity of coming to some explanation, he one evening staid later than usual, and after an awkward introduction, from which I gathered that he had imbibed a very high opinion of my integrity, and had convinced himself, I suppose, by the sentiments in my songs, that I was incapable of betraying any trust, however sacred, that might be reposed in me, he intreated me to accompany him to his house.

The dwelling of my new acquaintance, which was situated by the side of a cliff, seemed nothing more than a superior kind of cottage, and all the rooms commonly occupied in it had no other character; but, upon exploring the different apartments, I was in a state of astonishment. Such stores of goods, such muslins, gingham, laces, embroidery, ostritch feathers! The fact is, the gentleman was a smuggler, and in these warehouses, some of which were subterraneous, were deposited a prodigious quantity of gay materials for dress, of such various descriptions, that nothing but a catalogue of a fashionable haberdasher could give an adequate idea of them. As the time I am speaking

of was the month of May, these stores were remarkably full, and he did not scruple to shew me the different articles, which were consigned to capital houses in town to make up the court dresses for the following birthday, so that if I had been inclined to have turned informer, I might have made pretty work among the first rate milliners and mantua-makers. I smile even now when I pass by certain houses, to think how perfectly unconscious they are that I am in their secret. They may be easy, however, for severely as I reprobate national fraud, under such particular circumstances, I most solemnly gave my word not to betray my trust, and I have kept it inviolably.

Nor will this relation be considered as an infringement of my resolution, for the operation of the fact is gone by; and, though I do not believe that smuggling is so completely got under as is generally imagined, many of its worst effects are certainly done away; besides, my quondam friend is dead, and this gives me opportunity of introducing another extraordinary circumstance, so that you see you will have digression upon digression.

As this man did not hesitate to relate to me every material circumstance of his life, it was easy to see that he had dragged on a wretched existence. He would often lament how much happier he should have passed his time, had he been brought up to some honest employ; but what could he have done? All his family, as far back as he had heard of, had been smugglers, and he was forced to go with the tide. This conversation was one day renewed as we passed through the church-yard. "There," said he, pointing to a grave, "there lies my brother; he was hanged: he certainly behaved cruelly: he should not have shot the man, and yet he somehow deserved it, for he had often stood a bribe, and he ought not to have betrayed us that day." Lest I should forget it, I shall here shew what excisemen are. I saw a letter from one of them to this very man, in which were these words:—"I understand you want to land some goods on Fri-

day afternoon, therefore at that time I shall contrive to be three miles off upon government business."

"Well, but," said I, "I beg your pardon, it is a delicate subject, but people are generally dissected who are executed for murder."—"What, made otamies? Yes, but he was gibbeted." "Oh, ho, that alters the case; and so I suppose you and your relations, for fear of the shame—" "You are cute; yes, we unshipped him one squally night, and so brought him and stowed him there."—"And pray how did you manage to get the sexton?"—"The sexton! what, in this place! harke'e, the parson was as willing as the sexton."

He then went on to shew me how his brother had been treated by the lawyers, who had flattered him with expectations of safety, which I found was by an attempt to arrest the judgment, and as the circumstance is curious you shall have it.—(Concluded on page 66.)

Interesting Varieties.

A TRIP TO PARIS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NIC-NAC.

SIR,—As most of the periodical publications amuse their readers occasionally with original and authentic intelligence from foreign parts, I think your work should not be wholly without some articles of the kind; I therefore send you a copy of a letter written last autumn to his father, by Master Theophilus Tulip, a young gentleman who was introduced to the Town by Mr. Mathews, in the third part of his "At Home." This spark visited Paris, by way of Holland; and the following is the first epistle he wrote on his arrival, which contains quite as much sound sense and interesting information, as the greater part of the articles I have alluded to.

L. FAULKNER.

"Worshipful Sir, This comes with my dutiful love to you, not forgetting my respects to my loving mother, and our Margery. When we come over the sea from Harwich, it raged like any mad; and I throw'd up all

that was within me. I was very sick indeed;—so I was. But, I had kept the neat's tongue which mother had popp'd into my pocket at parting; and, every now and then, I took a little grub and bub to keep the wind out of my stomach, as mother said I must.

Our John, that you put into livery for me, takes great care of me, as mother bid him. I met Mr. Glasscock at the Hague; you know he was once our exciseman at Taunton; and he and I drank a bottle together. And moreover than that, I likewise met Will Simpkins, who left our parish a while ago, and was a soldier; he now sells wash-balls at Amsterdam; and he and I crack'd a bottle too. I keeps none but the best of company, and our John is never from me.

I never saw so many rivers in any part of England where I have been; as there is in Holland; but, they are all very narrow, and quite strait. For certain, we have more timber growing than they have, and sweeter butter; and our John says the same. They tells me, there is not a bishop in Holland, and I did not see one surplice in it; so you may guess, father, whether they be Christians. The people be for ever doing something, so I don't suppose they keep Sabbath; and our John is of the same mind.

When we came into Papish Countries, there I met with cathedrals again, many's the one, of which I was very glad, and so was our John. But, when I went into them at first, I would not doff my hat, because they belong'd to Papish idolators; till, at last, a fat parson, without either a shirt or a pair of shoes, and a great rope about his middle, look'd mortal angry, and gabbled at me in the outlandish tongue, as much as to say, "Pull off your hat!" and I was afraid he would do me a mischief, and so I did so. But, however, I told him my father had as good an estate as he, and was a justice of the peace into the bargain. This, I believe, frightened him; and, besides, our John stood by me all the while with his fist doubled; and so the fat parson waddled off, and there was no danger.

You can't imagine, father, and no more can't mother, what great huge wax candles they use in Papish countries upon the altars. I warrant every one of them has five pounds of tallow in it. Our John says he never saw the like, though he travell'd once before, when he was at the Isle of Wight. The Papishes also have their Prayer Books all in Latin, which I tells them is a burning shame, and persuades them to be of the Church of England; but I find they don't value our Church no more than nothing; so I can hardly meet with a Christian in these outlandish parts.

The French folks don't live near so well as we do in England; for our beef is fatter than theirs, by at least an inch on the rib; and they don't make no puddings at all. But, they eat frogs like mad, and the devil and all of onions. Our John is heart-sick of their diet.

The town of Paris is a main big town, and has a power of hackney-coaches in it. My new suit of clothes is as fresh as if I had put it on but yesterday, as our John can tell. I wore it two days ago at a ball, where there was a good many fine folks; but, I find they don't know much of Country-Dances here; for, when I call'd for Michael Wiggins, and afterwards for Off She Goes, the fiddlers knew nothing of them, and no more did not the company. There was a Colonel there, that looked very hard at me, and I doubted was going to press me for a trooper; so I stole softly down stairs, and ran home, and our John with me, as hard as we could drive.

This comes with my kind love, and our John's, to you, and mother, and our Margery; and our John's service to Peg Shum, the wheelwright's daughter. So, no more at present from, worshipful father, your ever loving son, till death,

THEOPHILUS TULIP.

Paris, 11th September, 1822."

HORRID TRAGICAL EVENT,

AT SMOLENSKO, NOV. LAST.

The following dreadful event lately occurred in this neighbourhood. The

owner of a lonely cottage being out on the chace, a beggar, to all appearance, old and weak, entered it at noon-day, and asked alms of the woman, who was at home, with only her two young children. The kind-hearted woman invited him to rest himself, while she went out to get something for him to eat and drink. After the beggar had satisfied his hunger, he, to the no small astonishment of the woman, assumed a different language, and, with a threatening voice, demanded the money, which he knew, he said, her husband had in the house. The wretch rushing on her with a large bread knife, to force her to acknowledge where it was deposited, she declared herself ready to give him what money she had, and for this purpose mounted a ladder to a trap-door, leading to the loft above. As soon as she had mounted, she drew up the ladder, so that it was impossible for him to get at her. Finding that she disregarded his menaces, he seized the two children, and swore that he would either kill or maim them if she did not immediately come down and deliver him the money as she had promised. The woman, however, remained in the loft, and endeavoured to force a hole through the thatch and call for help. While she was thus employed, the monster cut off the children's ears and noses; and at last killed the poor maimed innocents, scornfully proclaiming to the mother the murder he had committed. The latter having with great exertions made a hole in the roof, called aloud for help. Her cries were heard by an officer who was passing by in an open carriage, who sent his servant to enquire what was the matter. The servant hastened to the spot, but on entering the cottage was met by the murderer, who plunged the knife into his heart, so that he fell and expired without a groan. The officer, surprised at his delay, went himself to the cottage, where, perceiving the horrid scene, he attempted to stop the flight of the murderer, and with his sabre cut off all the fingers of his right hand, as he escaped through the door. The woman had, while all

this was passing below, made her way through the roof, and run to the village for assistance. Meantime the husband, on his way home, met the blood-stained murderer, whom he recognized as a beggar who frequented that part of the country. The hypocrite, concealing his fears under affected lamentation, held up his mutilated hand, saying, "Make haste; there is in your house a murderer, an officer, who has killed your children, and likewise a man who attempted to defend them, and from whom I have narrowly escaped in the condition you see me." The terrified countryman, while the atrocious villain hastens to escape, flies, with his loaded gun in his hand, to his cottage, perceives through the open door the officer and the bloody corpses of his children, takes him, of course, for the murderer, levels his piece, and shoots him dead on the spot! The wife coming up with the villagers, hears the report, sees the officer fall, utters a piercing cry, and exclaims—"What have you done! You have killed our deliverer! Not he, but the beggar is the murderer of our children!" The husband, whose whole frame is shaken by the horror of the scene, and still more by his own rash deed, stands a few moments, petrified and motionless, falls back in a fit, and expires!

MEDITATIONS ON A QUID OF TOBACCO.

It lay before me on the close-graz'd grass,
Beside my path, an old tobacco quid:
And shall I by the mute adviser pass
Without one serious thought? no, heaven forbid!

Perhaps, some idle drunkard threw thee there;
Some husband, spendthrift of his weekly hire:

One who for wife and children takes no care,
But sits and tipples by the alehouse fire.

Ah! luckless was the day he learn'd to chew,

Embryo of ills, the quid that pleas'd him first;

Thirsty, from that unhappy quid he grew,
Then to the alehouse went to quench his thirst.

So great events from causes small arise:
The forest oak was once an acorn seed;
And many a man, from drunkenness who dies,
Owes all his evils to the Indian weed.

Let not temptation mortal e'er come nigh;
Suspect some ambush in the parley hid,
From the first kiss of love, ye maidens, fly,
Ye youths, avoid the first tobacco quid!

Perhaps I wrong thee, O thou veteran chaw,
And better thoughts my musings should engage;
That thou wast rounded in some toothless jaw;
The joy, perhaps, of solitary age.

One who has suffer'd Fortune's hardest knocks;
Poor, and with none to tend on his grey hairs;
Yet has a friend, in his tobacco box;
And while he rolls his quid forgets his cares!

E'en so it is with human happiness;
Each seeks his own according to his whim;
One toils for wealth; one fame alone can bless;
One asks a quid, a quid is all to him!

O! veteran chaw! thy fibres' savoury store,
While aught remain'd to chew, thy master chew'd;
Then cast thee here, when all thy juice was o'er,
Emblem of selfish man's ingratitude!

A happy man, O cast-off quid! is he,
Who, like to thee, has comforted the poor:

Happy his age, who knows himself like thee;
Thou didst thy duty, man can do no more.

The Wit's Nunchion.

ANECDOTES OF COOKE.

A PHYSICIAN seeing Cooke about to take a glass of brandy, said, "Don't drink that filthy stuff: brandy is the worst enemy you have."—"I know that," replied Cooke, "but you know the scripture commands us to love our enemies; so here goes!"

Cooke's attachment to the bottle brought him to destruction, but it occasionally gave rise to some ludicrous scenes, of which the following is a specimen, taken from the first part of Ryley's *Itinerant*:—Cooke was once passing an evening at Manchester, in the bar of a public house, amongst a mixed company, and after having been for some time the life of the party, his spirits became unfortunately too elevated.—There was a large fire in the bar, before which stood, with his coat flaps under his arms, a pitiful imitation of buckism, neither cleanly in person nor in dress. His face was grimy, and his neckcloth of the same tint, which, nevertheless, was rolled in various folds about his throat; his hair was matted and turned up, under a round greasy hat, with narrow brims, conceitedly placed on one side of his head, which nodded under it, like that of a shaking mandarin. Thus equipped, the filthy fop straddled before the fire, which he completely monopolized. At length he caught Cooke's eye, who, after surveying him in silent amazement for a minute from top to toe, burst into a horse laugh, and roared out, "Beau Nasty, by—!" Of this the beau took no notice; upon which Cooke presently rose from his seat, and taking up the skirts of his coat in imitation of the other, turned his back to the fire. "Warm work for the back settlements, sir," said he. This being unnoticed, he approached nearer, and, as if he had some secret to communicate, in a loud whisper interrogated, "Pray, sir, how is soap?" "Soap!" "Yes, sir, soap: I understand it is coming down." "I am glad of it, sir." "Indeed, sir, you have cause, if one may judge from your appearance." At this there was a general laugh, which the stranger seemed not to regard; but nodding his head, and hitting his boots with a little rattle, he rang the bell with an air of importance, and enquired, if he could have a *WEAL KITTEL* or a mutton *CHIEF*? "What do you think," said Cooke, "of a roasted puppy? because (taking up the poker) I'll spit

you, and roast you in a minute?"—This had a visible effect on the dirty beau; he retreated towards the door, Cooke following, and exclaiming, "Avaunt! and quit my sight! Thy face is dirty, and thy hands unwash'd! Avaunt! avaunt, I say!" Then replacing the poker, and resuming his seat, he continued, "Being gone, I am a man again!"

Cooke was announced one evening to play the Stranger, at the Dublin Theatre. When he made his appearance, evident marks of agitation were visible in his countenance and gesture. This, by the generality of the audience, was called great acting; but those who were acquainted with his failing, classed it very properly under the head of intoxication. When the applause had ceased, with difficulty he pronounced, "Yonder hut—yonder hut," pointing to his cottage; then beating his breast, and striking his forehead, he paced the stage in much apparent anxiety of mind. Still this was taken for the chef d'œuvre of fine acting, and was followed by loud plaudits, and "bravo, bravo!" At length having cast many a menacing look at the prompter, who repeatedly, though in vain, gave him the word, he came forward, and with overacted feeling, thus addressed the audience: "You are a mercantile people—you know the value of money—a thousand pounds, my all, lent to serve a friend, is lost for ever. My son, too—pardon the feelings of a parent—my only son—as brave a youth as ever fought his country's battles, is slain: not many hours ago I received the intelligence, but, thank God, he died in defence of his king!"—Here his feelings became so powerful, they choked his utterance, and, with his handkerchief to his eyes, he staggered off the stage, amidst the applause of those who, not knowing the man, pitied his situation. Now, the fact is, Cooke never possessed a thousand pounds in his life, nor had ever the honour of being a father; but too much intoxicated to recollect his part, he invented this story, as the only way by which he could decently retire; and the sequel of the business

was, that he was sent home in a chair whilst another actor played the part.

The Bacchanalian propensities of Cooke are well known. Sitting one evening with a few friends, at a tavern, he called for some brandy, which was brought him in a small glass; upon this, holding it up, he thus addressed the company:—"Gentlemen, you have often heard me called an incorrigible drunkard; but I think you may now congratulate me on having conquered this failing, for, you see, I have left off drinking in a GREAT MEASURE!"

An hour or two afterwards he became very drunk and quarrelsome, and insisted upon fighting with the person who sat next to him; this caused great confusion, and a scuffle ensued, in the midst of which, Cooke thrust his arm through the window, and shivered one of the panes to atoms. His conduct altogether had been so brutal, and had so completely destroyed the harmony of the company, that it was resolved, nem. con. to expel him from the house, a resolution which was immediately put in force. The night was cold and rainy, but Cooke's resentment for some time forbade him to expostulate; at length, however, his uncomfortable situation prevailed over his anger, so applying his face to the fracture he had made in the window, he addressed the company in the following words: "Gentlemen, I SEE THROUGH my error, and promise better behaviour, if you will allow me once more to join you."—The manner in which this appeal was urged, was quite irresistible, and George Frederic was again admitted to the social circle.

During one of his provincial engagements, Cooke had so offended the public, by disappointing or disgusting them, that when he appeared, the gentlemen in the boxes, near the stage, by agreement, turned their backs on the scene. He was dressed for Falstaff, but immediately noticing this unusual appearance, and comprehending the intent, instead of begin-

ning the part, he said in a voice sufficiently audible to those who were reproving him, "Call you this BACKING your friends? A plague on such backing, say I!" L. FAULKNER.

CONUNDRUMS.

(Continued from page 48.)

16. Why is a man offering to hand a fat lady into a gig, a musical composer? Because he makes an Overture to load a whiskey.*

17. What disease is that which is frequently experienced in a Theatre? The rising of the lights.

18. Why are lovers' sighs and groans like long stockings? Because they are high-hose. (Heigh-hos!)

19. What is that which no man would like to be without, and yet every minute wishes to get rid of? His beard.

20. Why is bad acting like a piece of bread in portable soup? Because 'tis in soup-portable. (Insupportable.)

21. Why is a man fond of bathing in a tie-wig, like a person wishing to be admitted into holy orders? Because he's attached to dive-in-a-tie. (Divinity.)

22. Why is a man flogging a lazy horse, like another recovering rapidly from a fit of sickness? Because he's mending a pace.

(Concluded at page 72.)

* i. e. "Lodoiska," which is always pronounced in the above barbarous manner by the genuine Cockney.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

"A hint—good—take it," his additional Nic to our NAC, we are willing to receive on trial, but, at the same time, we fear that a series of such articles as he offers will excite but a very limited interest.

It's anecdote of the Elephant in our next. We shall be happy to receive a continuance of this gentleman's correspondence; because we imagine he must have been witness to many curious facts in his travels abroad.

We received J. Ferguson's packet too late for this number.

THE NIG-NAG;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 9.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE:

ROYAL HOUSEHOLD.

THE following regulations for the household of Henry the Eighth, while they strikingly contrast the simplicity of those times with the splendour of the present, will call forth a smile from the reader, at the curious nature of some of the prohibitions, and the homely manner in which they are expressed:—

"His highness's baker shall not put allum in the bread, or mix rye, oats, or bean-flour in the same; and if detected, he shall be put in the stocks.—His highness's attendant's are not to steal any locks and keys, tables, forms, cupboards, or other furniture, out of noblemen's or gentlemen's houses where they go to visit. Master cooks shall not employ such scullions as go about naked, or lie all night on the floor before the kitchen fire.—No dogs are to be kept in court, but only a few spaniels for the ladies.—Dinner to be at ten, and supper at four.—The officers of his highness's privy chamber shall be loving together: no grumbling, nor talking of the king's pastime.—The king's barber is enjoined to be cleanly, and not to frequent the company of misguided women, for fear of danger to the royal person.—There shall be no romping with the maids on the staircases, by which dishes and other things are frequently broken.—Care shall be taken of the wooden spoons, and that the pewter used in the kitchen be not broken or stolen.—The pages shall not interrupt the maids; and he that gets one of them with child, shall pay a fine of two marks to his highness, and have his allowance of beer withheld for one month.—The grooms shall not steal his highness's straw for beds, sufficient being allowed them; nor bring lewd women into the stables to the increase of bastardy.—Coal only to be allowed

to the king's, queen's, and lady Mary's chambers. The brewer not to put any brimstone in the ale.—Ordered, that all the noblemen and gentlemen, at the end of the sessions of parliament, depart to their respective counties, on pain of the royal displeasure."

THE

EXECUTIONER OF CHARLES I.

AFTER the battle of Dettingen, the Earl of S— too freely exposed the injudicious conduct of the commander-in-chief of the British forces there, which gave him great offence, for that reason the Earl retired from court in disgust, and was preparing to go to his estate in Scotland, and there abide. A few days before his intended departure, he received a letter from an unknown hand, requesting an interview with him, at a specified time and place, and the day after another letter, more pressing than the former.

This was too singular to be wholly neglected; he therefore went to the place appointed (one of those by-streets in London, that most commonly indicate poverty and wretchedness); there, in a mean garret, by the help of a glimmering light, he perceived a man laying on the bed, with every appearance of old age. "Be seated, my lord," said he, "you have nothing to fear from a man a hundred and twenty-five years old. Have you not occasion for certain writings (mentioning them) that relate to your family and fortune?"

On Lord S— answering in the affirmative, "There they are," said he, "deposited in that casket;" at the same time giving him the key. "To whom," said the other, "am I indebted for this great favor?" If he was much surprised to learn that the miserable object before him was his great-grandfather, he was still more

K

astonished when he told him that he was the masked executioner of King Charles I.

"A cursed spirit of revenge," continued he, "impelled me to this foul deed. I had been treated, as I supposed, with indignity by my sovereign. I suspected him of having seduced my sister, and was determined to be revenged for this imagined injury. I entered into, and forwarded all the designs of Cromwell; and, to complete the measures of my wickedness, I solicited him to let me be the executioner.

"The vengeance of Heaven has pursued me ever since. I have been a wretched wanderer in Europe and Asia; and remorse has accompanied me in every place, while Heaven has protracted my miserable life beyond the ordinary term of nature. That casket contains the remains of my fortune. I came hither to end my wretched days. I had heard of your disgrace at court, the very reverse of what your virtues merited; and I wished, before I quitted this scene, to contribute thus to your welfare. All the return I request is, that you will leave me to myself, and shed a tear to the memory of one, whose long, long repentance may, at last, expiate his crimes. Lord S— earnestly pressed his hoary ancestor to retire with him to Scotland, and there, under a fictitious name, pass the remainder of his days. He long withstood all his entreaties, till, wearied out with importunity, he consented, or seemed to consent. The next day, however, when his lordship returned, he had quitted the spot, and, notwithstanding all the researches he made, his fate remains a mystery to this day."

SCILLY ISLANDS.

From the late C. Dibdin's Tour of England.
Concluded from page 60.

THE exciseman, at the time he was

shot, stood up to his middle in the water, and the smugglers were in a boat. The indictment was laid for murder committed on the high seas. It was curious enough to hear the particulars of the argument from this man, which after a very circumlocutory view of all he had heard on the subject, he finished with saying, "and so, when about three hundred pounds had been lawed away, poor Will, they hanged him by the neck."

I was born at Southampton, the neighbourhood of which place I always understood, even from my infancy, had been composed of these lawless gentry, not that this circumstance has been peculiar to Hampshire; nay, I have heard, as a notorious fact, that even the mayor and corporation of a certain town in that county, were smugglers to a man.

This intelligence was confirmed to me by the person I have been speaking of; and, if his reports were true, and I see nothing to impeach their credibility, the regulations for their conduct was digested into a sound connected system, emanating from abilities such as, in a more honourable cause, might have been an ornament to that legislature they were employed to undermine. These precautions, however, were no more than enough to ensure their safety, for their nefarious tricks were in their nature so gross and palpable, that, without a thorough right understanding, and a most invincible fidelity, it would have been impossible for them to have carried a single plan into execution.

As this intelligence was forced upon me, and any symptom of backwardness might have created a suspicion of my being capable of violating my fidelity, though it

was not very pleasant to go on, it was impossible to flinch; and as my lawless friend grew every hour more and more communicative, I knew at last enough, had I been so inclined, to have passed muster among them. When we took a turn in a boat, I was taught, by the arrangements, the colours of the buoys, what tea, tobacco, or other articles were sunk in waterproof repositories, and how and in what manner they were to be taken away. I became acquainted with the clues by which goods were to be searched for in the New Forest, near Netley-Abbey, and in other places. I knew, by the signals hoisted on the land marks near the shores and harbours, whether vessels were invited or forbidden to enter. I knew the meaning of every rocket that was fired in the night. I knew in what manner their vessels were constructed, so as to bid defiance to every mode of searching them; but what was very extraordinary, no one of the fraternity had the slightest suspicion that this man had given, or I had received, any of this information, a circumstance, by the bye, easily colorable, from my insatiate curiosity as to every thing nautical; for I have no doubt had such an idea been entertained, and followed up with confirmation, but it might have been fatal to us both.

My old friend stuck to me whenever he had an opportunity. He called on me in 1793, when I lived in the Strand, and in the presence of half a dozen people, informed me that his vessel was in the Thames laden with oysters; the meaning of which was that in the recesses of his sloop were deposited cantrics, kid gloves, black lace, and other French goods.

I'll give you one more instance of the systematic policy of this fraternity, in the execution of which my curious companion acted as commander-in-chief, and it is a circumstance of which every person's recollection will serve to corroborate the feasibility. It will be in a moment remembered, that a manufacture called leno³ something in the nature of Scotch gauze, was for a time universally worn, and all of a sudden as universally left off. It

seemed as if it had vanished. It was taken to Spain and Portugal, for veils; and though I will not say, or venture to hint, that any shopkeeper connived at it, the produce was laid out in contraband goods, and those goods were landed, duty free, in England, and conveyed principally to London. I might say much more on this subject, but, as this brings me to my point, I shall only add, that the places of general rendezvous for carrying on this traffic, were Guernsey, Jersey, the Isle of Man, and the Scilly Islands.

So much for my knowledge of smuggling, and how I came by it. It may not be amiss, however, to wind up the account of the principal character in this narrative and his connections. The elder brother, as I have related, was hanged; the second, in consequence of crowding too much sail to escape from a revenue cutter, was drowned; and my friend, the youngest, after the confraternity were routed, bought a commission in the army, to attach himself, I hope, to his king and country, by way of atoning for his former conduct; but, whether he felt awkward in an honorable profession, or was unable to subdue certain qualms produced by the reflection of his former rogueries, he grew melancholy, and at length put a period to his existence by a pistol.

The largest and best cultivated among these islands I believe is St. Mary's. It is three miles long and two miles broad. It is separated into two, called the old and the new town, and it contains from seven hundred to a thousand inhabitants. One has a fort, a cave, and a pier, and the other is guarded by a peninsula, formed by nature for a fortification, and accommodated with a pool, where a hundred tolerably large vessels may ride at anchor. We learn a great deal about barrows, which boast various origins, according to various authors, and of tolmens, or vast stones, near one of which was found the body of Sir Cloudesly Shovel.

Agnes, situated about three miles from St. Mary's, is cultivated and very fruitful, both in corn and grass. It has an admirable light-house, which

is an excellent sea-mark both by day and night. Annet is close to Agnes. It is small and rocky. Trescaw, otherwise called St. Nicholas, has the advantage of all the other islands in point of water, which article is very scarce in these places, and in particular at Agnes. In Trescaw are to be found among the rocks, as we are told, rock deities, which are as ugly and mishapen, and were held in as great veneration as the Pagods of the Indians, or the Isis and Osiris of the Egyptians.

As for the rest, North Wethel consists of no more than about ten acres of land, and the little island call Tean is uninhabited; but St. Martin's produces good corn and fine pasturage, and, therefore, has a few inhabitants, about eighty, which, though separated into families, are all relations, something like the inmates of Sandwich, in Kent, both in connection and origin. Perhaps, from this friendly intercourse, they are happier, and thrive better, than the other islanders, for they not only cultivate their own land to perfection, but rent land at St. Mary's, and are remarkable for being the best makers of kelp in all these islands. As for Breher and Samson they are small, rocky, and almost incapable of cultivation.

All these islands belong to Lord Godolphin. There are four churches, but they have but one clergyman, so that if he happens to be ill, church service is suspended till his recovery; but there is an island clerk established at each place, with whom they are content to put up with as their pastor's locum tenens. There are fossils and minerals of almost every kind that are to be found in Cornwall; but not either in sufficient quantity or such superior quality, as to induce any speculation as to mining. It may be material to remark, that Trescaw, Breher, and Samson, form, at low water, but one island, and this is a kind of corroborative proof of what has been advanced relative to the insular situation of the whole.

These islands lie almost ten leagues to the west of the Land's End, in Cornwall, and are easily discerned

from it. The Scilly isles, or rocks are said to be 145 in number, and have been destructive to number of ships entering the Channel. (END.)

CHARLES DIBDIN.

PRAY, Mr. Editor, wind up your extracts from Dibdin's Tour with the following copy of the inscription upon his tomb-stone. I transcribed it one evening last summer, from an oblong slab, placed over his remains, in the pretty burial ground of St. Martin's parish, on the north-east side of Camden Town, and I do not recollect having ever met with it in print. Dibdin was the genuine English ballad writer after all, Moore's compositions are, perhaps, better adapted to the use of smock-faced sentimental young gentlemen, who intoxicate themselves with green tea, lemonade, and negus; but, for a fine manly composition, adapted as well to touch the heart as to tickle the fancy, you must have recourse to the volumes of Dibdin.

Jan. 1823.

DICK.

"Sacred to the memory of CHARLES DIBDIN, the celebrated Author and Composer, who departed this life, the 25th of July, 1814, aged 69 years. This stone is placed by his disconsolate wife and daughter, as a dutiful token to the most affectionate and best of husbands.

"His form was of the manliest beauty,
"His heart was kind and soft,
"Faithful below he did his duty,
"But now he's gone aloft."

GHOST STORIES.

NO. II.

THE following strange relation was given by Hyppolite Clairon, the celebrated French actress, in a letter addressed to M. Meister, one of her intimate friends. The reader will form his own opinion of the assertions it contains; and either laugh or look grave about the matter, as may best suit his disposition. It is but proper to add that I have taken the liberty of compressing the narrative in some parts, to bring it within the

limits of the Nic-Nac, but without making any omission that could at all destroy the connection of the story, or weaken its interest.

22d. Jan. 1823.

"In the year 1748, my youth, and the success with which I had appeared at the Opera and the Theatre Francais, procured me a considerable number of admirers, among whom were several worthy and sensible characters. M. de S—, son of a merchant of Brittany, about thirty years of age, and possessing a handsome figure, with a cultivated understanding, was one of those who made the deepest impression on me. His manners evinced the education of a gentleman, and of one used to the best company. His reserve and timidity, which scarce allowed him to explain himself, even by looks, made me distinguish him from among all my lovers. After I had been some time the object of his attentions, I permitted his visits at my house, and left him no room to doubt the friendship with which he had inspired me. Perceiving I was of an easy and tender disposition, he was patient, trusting that time would awaken in my breast a stronger sentiment towards him than mere friendship — 'Who can tell? Who can say what may happen?' Such were frequently his remarks; but, by answering candidly to all the questions which my prudence or my curiosity dictated, he entirely ruined his cause. Ashamed of being the son of a citizen, he had disposed of his effects, in order to expend the produce at Paris, under a more elevated title. This displeased me. To blush for himself seemed to me to justify the disdain of others. His temper was gloomy and melancholy. 'He was too well acquainted with men,' he would say, 'not to despise and shun them.' His plan was to live only for me, and that I should live for him alone;—this displeased me still more, as you may well imagine. I might have been content to be restrained by a flowery wreath, but I could not brook being confined by a chain. From this moment, I

saw the necessity of destroying the flattering hope which nourished his attachment, and of forbidding his frequent visits. This determination, which I persisted in, produced a serious indisposition, during which I rendered him every possible care; but my constant refusal to indulge the passion he entertained for me, made his wound still deeper; and, unfortunately, his brother-in-law, to whom he had given a power of attorney to receive the property he was entitled to from the sale of his effects, left him so much in want of money, that he was compelled to accept such loans as I could accommodate him with. This was a deep mortification to him.—You will perceive, my dear Henry, the importance of keeping this secret in your own bosom. I respect his memory, and would not abandon it to the insulting pity of mankind. Preserve the same religious silence, which I have now, for the first time, violated, and which I have merely done on account of my profound esteem for you.

"At length, he recovered his property, but not his health. I considered his absence from me would be to his advantage; and therefore refused to receive either his letters or his visits.

"Two years and a half elapsed between the commencement of our acquaintance and his death. He entreated me to sooth, by my company, the last moments of his life. My engagements prevented me from complying with his request. He died in the presence of an old lady, who had for some time attended upon him. He then lodged upon the Rampart, near La Chaussee d'Autin, which had just begun to be built. I resided in La Rue de Bussy, near La Rue de Seine, and Abbey of St. Germain. My mother, and several of my friends, generally supped with me. My visitors were, an Intendant of the Privy Purse, whose friendship was of infinite service to me; the good Pipelet, whom you formerly knew and admired; the Roseley, one of my companions at the

theatre, a young man of respectable birth and talents. The suppers of this period, though the company was small, were much more entertaining than the most expensive fetes have been for the last forty years past. It was at one of these suppers, and when I had been singing an air with which my friends expressed themselves extremely delighted, that, just as the clock struck eleven, our ears were struck with the most piercing cry I ever had heard. Its long continuance and piteous sound astonished every one. I fainted away, and was nearly a quarter of an hour insensible.

“The Intendant was amorous and jealous. When I revived, he said to me, with some degree of spleen, that the signals of my assignations were somewhat too noisy. I answered, that I was mistress of myself, and at liberty to receive, at all hours, whomsoever I thought proper, therefore, signals were entirely useless to me; ‘and,’ added I, ‘that which you call one, is of too dreadful a nature to be the prelude to the soft moments dedicated to love.’ My paleness, the tremor which still agitated me, the tears which flowed in spite of my efforts to restrain them, and my entreaties that my companions would remain with me part of the night, convinced them I was ignorant of the source from whence the noise had proceeded. We passed some time in fruitless conjectures as to what could have been the cause of it, and came to a resolution to set people to watch in the street, in order to ascertain it, in case it should be repeated.

“Every one in the house, my neighbours, the police even, heard the same sort of cry repeated under my windows at the same hour, and appearing to proceed from the air. There was no doubt of its being particularly intended for my hearing; for, though I seldom supped in town, yet, when I did, the cry was never heard; but often, when I was conversing with my mother and my servants upon the subject, it would burst forth in the midst of us.—
(Continued on page 76.)

Interesting Varieties.

SAGACITY OF AN ELEPHANT.

SIR,—Being myself an eye-witness of the natural sagicity of the elephant, I should think the authenticity of the following anecdote is sufficiently established:—

Passing the auction yard, at Calcutta, in the year 1802, I observed a very large elephant fastened by means of a rope attached to his off fore leg, and another fast to his near hind leg, which ropes were secured to strong stumps driven in the ground, having a scope of about two feet. I stood for a considerable time to observe his motions: he being much annoyed by flies, &c. drew up a quantity of small stones, and blew them from his proboscis over his back and loins, which disturbed them for a time; but he had other enemies, who had made a lodgment between his hind legs and hinder parts, who were secure from his missiles, and seemed to torment him considerably. At the distance of twelve or fourteen feet from his head there lay a quantity of boughs of trees, which he endeavoured to reach but was unable, in consequence of the shortness of the ropes; he then turned his head, and appeared to deliberate how to act; at last he rubbed his freed hind leg against the other in bondage, and contrived to slip the noose off his foot; he then turned his bulk round, and extending one of his hind feet, drew a few boughs within reach of his trunk: after selecting one that suited his purpose (a branch about seven feet in length) he placed his fore foot on the stout end, and stripped off the smaller branches with his trunk, leaving a small bough at the top; he then seized the thick end and flourished it over his buttocks and between his legs with as much address as a coachman handles his whip with four in hand, laying many of his foes dead at his feet, the rest flying in all directions; but, alas! his keeper making his appearance, and speaking in a sharp tone of reprimand, the poor animal dropt his weapon, slunk his head, and dejectedly turned to his for-

mer position, holding up his monstrous limb while the keeper secured him again in durance vile. H.

AN

ADDRESS TO A TEA-KETTLE.

FOR many a verse inspired by tea,
(A never-failing muse to me,)
My kettle let this tribute flow,
Thy charms to blazon.
And tell thy modest worth, altho'
Thy face is BRAZEN.

Let others boast the madd'ning bowl,
That raises but to sink the soul,
Thou art the Bacchus that alone
I wish to follow;
From thee I tippie Helicon,
My best Apollo!

Tis nigh—my children sleep—no noise
Is heard, except thy cheerful voice,
For when the wind would gain mine ear,
Thou sing'st the faster,
As if thou wert resolv'd to cheer
Thy lonely master.

And so thou do'st: those brazen lungs
Vent no deceit, like human tongues;
That honest breath was never known
To turn informer;
And for thy feelings—all must own
That none are warmer.

Of late, another eye and ear
Would mark thy form, thy music hear;
Alas! how soon our pleasures fly,
Returning never!
That ear is deaf—that friendly eye
Is closed for ever!

Be thou, then, now, my friend, my guide,
And humming wisdom by my side,
Teach me so patiently to bear
Hot water troubles,
That they may end, like thine, in air,
And turn to bubbles.

Let me support misfortune's fire,
Unhurt, and, when I fume with ire,
Whatever friend my passions sees
And near me lingers,
Let him still handle me with ease,
Nor burn his fingers.

O may my memory, like thy front,
When I am cold, endure the brunt
Of vitrol envy's keen assaults,
And shine the brighter,
And ev'ry rub but make my faults
Appear the lighter!

WHIMSICAL AFFAIR.

FOUR Savoyard chimney-sweepers, at Toulouse, in 1761, having finished every thing in the way of their profession, and not having a penny left took a resolution to enlist for soldiers. Accordingly they received ten Louis d'ors each, but the officer thought it necessary, by way of precaution, to lock them in a kitchen with some flaggons of wine. As long as the liquor lasted, they were quiet enough, but when it was exhausted, they began to think of making their escape, and were not long in settling that point. There was a large chimney before them, which they mounted with their usual dexterity, and being fairly got to the top, they held a council, when it was unanimously resolved to go down another chimney. In going down, the first tumbled into a great fire, out of which he jumped, covered with soot, into the middle of the room, and was immediately followed by his three companions. The place happened to be a gaming house, and the company, taking these adventurers for so many devils, ran down stairs as fast as they could, leaving their money, to the amount of twelve thousand livres, behind them. This the Savoyards seized, and in an instant remounted the chimney, running over the tops of the houses, and descended again into their old apartment, just as the officer opened the door with some provisions. They offered him his money again, with a handsome profit, which he accepted, and they returned to their own country, thus enriched, and highly delighted with the adventure. W. H. WILLS.

ON FROGS.

AT Vienna frogs are esteemed a great delicacy: the hind legs are mostly in request, two pair of which are sold for three-halfpence. The fore legs and livers are used for soup. These animals are brought from the country, thirty or forty thousand at a time, and are sold to dealers, who

keep conservatories for the purpose, in which holes are dug, three or four feet deep, in the ground, which are covered with a board, and at the bottom of the pits are put straw, so that the frogs are never quite torpid, and are always ready for the cook.

J. T. FERGUSON.

ON SPIDERS.

A remarkable occurrence happened once at the church of St. Eustace in Paris. The sexton of that place remarked that a particular lamp went out before the rest, and that the oil was gone, but the wick remained; he, therefore, determined to watch and see the reason of it; when he found that a very large spider came down the rope and drank the oil.

An equally singular occurrence happened at a church in Milan, in 1751. Mr. Morland, of the academy of sciences, has given the following relation of it:—A great spider, which weighed two pounds, was observed drinking from one of the lamps, it was taken, and sent to the Emperor of Austria, and is now in the imperial museum at Vienna.

J. FERGUSON.

CONUNDRUMS.

(Concluded from page 64.)

23. Why does an eye resemble a severe schoolmaster?

Because it has always a pupil under the lash.

24. Why is a man crossing a river in a boat which upsets, like a person who has got a large fortune left him?

Because he's in, depend on't. (Independent.)

25. Why are prize-fights called pitch-battles?

Because they are by two men. [Bitumen.]

26. Why is the letter S like a furnace in a battery?

Because it makes hot Shot.

27. Why is a man who constantly wears spectacles, likely to be a good customer to the grocers?

Because he's fond of isinglass. (Eyes in glass.)

28. Why is a pretty woman like an Irish prisoner eating his dinner?

Because she is captiv-ating.

29. Why do most Operas resemble the caravans in which Messrs. Clementi, &c. convey their instruments about the town?

Because they are mere vehicles for music.

30. Why is a lover like a crow?

Because he has an attachment to carry on. (Carrion.)

31. Why is herb soup the most splendid of all soups?

Because 'tis soup herb. (Superb.)

32. What word is that, which, when a letter is taken from it makes you sick?

Musick.

33. What sea can you lie down in without getting wet?

A-dry-attic. (Adriatic.)

34. Why is a room full of married people like an empty room?

Because there is not a single person in it.

35. Why may feet be correctly styled ancient histories?

Because they are leg ends. (Legends.)

36. Why is your father's mother like the tallest soldier in the Foot Guards?

Because she's a grenadier. (Granny dear!)

FRISK.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are sorry that a Correspondent finds himself disappointed because none of his transmissions were in our last paper. We must inform him that it is our business to select what articles we think most novel, but we find that he has sent us several things gathered from the publications of the day, which is a plan we wish to avoid as much as possible, because we began not with a view to fill our pages with what our readers may have just before been put in possession of.

We beg leave to decline admitting into our pages "The Nic to our Nac," although, to do justice to the writer, we are obliged to acknowledge that the subject is novel, and the criticism full of pertinent remarks, which would, no doubt, prove extremely interesting to certain parties.

The Ancient Vessel came too late to be inspected this week.

G. M. D., F. Hall, and W. C. anon.

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. X.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1823.

PRICE 1d.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown us."—SHAKESPEARE.



"The stag at eve had drank his fill

"Where danced the moon on Monan's rill."—WALTER SCOTT.

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

SIR WALTER SCOTT having indulged the literary world with another highly interesting production, under the title of "Peveril of the Peak," we have embraced the earliest opportunity of presenting our readers with the first part of the narrative, which we intend continuing in a synoptical manner, that, while it proves interesting, it may not occupy too much of our room, nor appear tedious or a waste of time to the peruser. The high estimation in which this nobleman's abilities are held, is incontestibly proved by the avidity which every one evinces in their eagerness to read his effusions; and surely Mr. NIC-NAC would be deemed very remiss if he did not scrape together a few of this author's precious words before the ravenous literati had swallowed them all.

WILLIAM, the Conqueror of England, was, or supposed himself to be, the father of a certain William Peveril, and not wishing to let his son's illegitimacy be a bar to his royal favour, granted him certain property and lordships in Derbyshire, and he became the erector of that Gothic fortress, which, hanging over the mouth of the Devil's Cavern, so well known to tourists, gives the name of Castleton to the adjacent village. In King John's stormy days these possessions were forfeited by one William Peveril, yet his descendants were long distinguished by the proud title of Peverils of the Peak.

In Charles the Second's time, the representative of this ancient family was Sir Geoffrey Peveril, a man who had many of the ordinary attributes of an old-fashioned country gentle-

man, and very few individual traits to distinguish him from the general portrait of that worthy class of mankind. In religion Sir Geoffrey was a high churchman, though many thought he still nourished in private the Roman Catholic tenets, which his family had only renounced in his father's time.

When the civil wars broke out, Peveril of the Peak, proud from pedigree, and brave by constitution, raised a regiment for the king, and shewed upon several occasions more capacity to command than men had heretofore given him credit for. In the midst of the civil turmoil, he fell in love with, and married, a beautiful and amiable young lady of the noble house of Stanley; but scorning to be allured by domestic inducements, Peveril of the Peak fought on for several rough years of civil war, until his regiment was cut to pieces by Poyntz, Cromwell's enterprising and successful general of cavalry. The defeated cavalier escaped to his castellated mansion (Martindale Castle), which suffered severely from the cannon Cromwell brought against it: it at length surrendered, and Sir Geoffrey became a prisoner; but his liberty was restored upon a promise of remaining a peaceful subject to the commonwealth in future.

But his forced promise did not prevent him from joining the Earl of Derby. He witnessed also the final defeat of Worcester, where he was a second time made prisoner, and nearly shared with the Earl of Derby his execution at Bolton-le-Moor. But Sir Geoffrey's life was preserved by the interest of a friend, who possessed influence in the councils of Oliver.—This was a Mr. Bridgenorth, a gentleman of middling quality, who, when young, attended the same school with the heir of the Peverils. A sort of companionship, if not intimacy, took place betwixt them. Mr. Bridgenorth did not, however, carry his complaisance so far as to embrace Sir Geoffrey's side during the civil war, but became a decided Roundhead, and all friendly intercourse betwixt them was abruptly broken asunder. This was done with the less acrimony, as

Sir Geoffrey was almost constantly in the field, while Major Bridgenorth resided chiefly in London, and only occasionally visited Moultrassie Hall, which was but two miles distant from Martindale Castle, for the purpose of seeing his wife and family.

Upon these visits he learned with pleasure, that Lady Peveril had shewn much kindness to Mrs. Bridgenorth, and had actually given her and her family shelter in the castle when Moultrassie Hall was threatened with pillage by a body of Prince Rupert's ill-disciplined cavaliers.

Major Bridgenorth determined to repay the obligation, as far as he could without hurt to himself, and it was chiefly owing to his mediation, that Sir Geoffrey's life was saved after Worcester battle. He obtained him permission to compound for his estate, and, finally, when, in order to raise the money to pay the fine by which he had been punished, the knight was obliged to sell a considerable portion of his patrimony, Major Bridgenorth became the purchaser, and that at a larger price than had been paid to any cavalier under such circumstances, by a member of the Committee for Sequestrations.

In the beginning of the year 1658, Major Bridgenorth was childless; ere it ended, he had a daughter, indeed, but her birth was purchased by the death of an affectionate wife. The same voice which told Bridgenorth that he was father of a living child, (it was the friendly voice of Lady Peveril,) communicated to him the melancholy intelligence that he was no longer a husband. The feelings of Major Bridgenorth were strong and deep, rather than hasty and vehement; and his grief assumed the form of a sullen stupor, from which neither the friendly remonstrances of Sir Geoffrey, who did not fail to be with his neighbour at this distressing conjuncture, even though he knew he must meet the Presbyterian pastor, nor the ghostly exhortations of this latter person, were able to rouse the unfortunate widower.

Without detaining the reader's attention longer on this painful theme,

it is enough to say that Lady Peveril undertook the duties of a mother to the little orphan. The voice of Peveril continued to be that of a comforter, until the month of April, 1660, when it suddenly assumed a new and different tone. "The king shall enjoy his own again," far from ceasing, as the hasty tread of Black Hastings came up the avenue, bore burthen to the clatter of his hoofs on the paved court-yard, as Sir Geoffrey sprang from his great war-saddle, now once more garnished with pistols of two feet in length, and, armed with steel-cap, back and breast, and a truncheon in his hand, he rushed into the apartment of the astonished Major, with his eyes sparkling, and his cheek inflamed, as he called out,—“Up! up, neighbour! No time now to mope in the chimney-corner. Where is your buff-coat and broadsword, man? Take the true side once in your life, and mend past mistakes. The king is all lenity, man—all royal nature and mercy. I will get your full pardon.”

“What means all this?” said Bridgenorth—“is all well with you—all well at Martindale Castle, Sir Geoffrey?”

“Well as you could wish them, Alice and Julian and all. But I have news worth twenty of that—Monk has declared at London against those stinking scoundrels the Rump. Fairfax is up in Yorkshire—for the king for the king, man! Churchmen, Presbyterians and all, are in buff and bandelier for King Charles. I have a letter from Fairfax to secure Derby and Chesterfield, with all the men I can make. D—n him, fine that I should take orders from him! But never mind that—all are friends now, and you and I, good neighbour, will charge abreast, as good neighbours should. See, there, read—read—and then boot and saddle in an instant.

‘Hey for cavaliers—ho for cavaliers, Pray for cavaliers,

Dub-a-dub, dub-a-dub,
Have at old Beelzabub,
Oliver shakes in his bier.’”

After thundering forth this elegant effusion of loyal enthusiasm, the stur-

dy cavalier's heart became too full. He threw himself in a seat, and exclaiming, “Did ever I think to see this happy day!” he wept, to his own surprise, as much as to that of Bridgenorth.

Sir Geoffrey and Bridgenorth were both at Chesterfield, which was peaceably secured on the king's behalf, when the news arrived that the king was landed in England; and Sir Geoffrey instantly announced his purpose of waiting upon his majesty, even before his return to the Castle of Martindale.

“Who knows, neighbour,” he said, “whether Sir Geoffrey Peveril will ever return to Martindale? Titles must be going amongst them yonder, and I have deserved something among the rest.—Lord Peveril would sound well—or stay, Earl of Martindale—no, not of Martindale—Earl of the Peak.—Meanwhile trust your affairs to me—I will see you secured—I would you had been no Presbyterian, neighbour—a knighthood,—I mean a knight-bachelor, not a knight baronet,—would have served your turn well.”

“I leave these things to my betters, Sir Geoffrey,” said the Major, “and desire nothing so earnestly as to find all well at Martindale when I return.”

“You will—you will find them all well,” said the Baronet; “Julian, Alice, Lady Peveril, and all of them—bear my commendations to them, and kiss them all, neighbour, Lady Peveril and all—you may kiss a Countess when I come back; all will go well with you now you are turned honest man.”

“I always meant to be so, Sir Geoffrey,” said Bridgenorth calmly.

“Well, well, well—no offence meant,” said the Knight, “all is well now—so you to Moultrassie Hall, and I to Whitehall. Said I well, aha! So ho, mine host, a stoup of Canary to the king's health ere we get to horse—I forgot, neighbour—you drink no healths.”

“I wish the king's health as sincerely as if I drank a gallon to it,” replied the Major; “and I wish you, Sir Geoffrey, success on your journey and on your return.”—(See page 82.)

GHOST STORIES.

No. II.

A sad tale is best for winter ;
 I have one of ghosts and spirits :—
 I'll tell it softly—yon CRITIC shall not hear it.
 SHAKESPEARE.

"One evening, the President de B—, at whose house I had supped, escorted me home : as he was wishing me good night at my door, the cry alarmed us. He, as well as nearly all Paris, can vouch for the truth of this history. The president was so terrified, that he was conducted to his carriage more dead than alive.

"Another time, I asked my friend Roseley to accompany me to la Rue St. Honore, to purchase some articles of dress, and pay a visit to Mademoiselle de St. P—, who lodged near St. Dennis's Gate. The chief subject of our conversation was the spirit, as he called it. Though he ridiculed my adventure, he was struck with its singularity ; he pressed me to invoke the phantom, and promised to place implicit belief in it, if it answered me. Whether it was owing to my weakness or my boldness, I know not ; but I did as he requested. The cry was immediately uttered three distinct times, with a degree of rapidity and shrillness terrible beyond expression. When we arrived at our friend's house, we were obliged to be assisted out of the coach, where we were found sitting, petrified with terror, and nearly insensible.

"After this I remained some months without hearing anything of it, and began to imagine that I was freed from it for ever ;—but, I deceived myself.

"All the theatrical exhibitions were ordered to Versailles, on account of the marriage of the Dauphin. We were to repair there in three days, and there were some of the actresses for whom lodgings had not been secured. Among others Madame Granville had none. She remained with me, in the expectation that one would be procured for her. At three in the morning I offered to share my chamber with her ; it had two beds, one for myself, and another for my servant ;

she accepted my offer ; I gave her the least of the two, and got into my own. While my servant was undressing herself, I said to her, 'We are now almost at the end of the world ; and besides, the weather is so tempestuous, that the cry would be rather puzzled to find us out here.' It was at that time instantly uttered. Madame Granville thought all the demons of hell were in the room ; she ran in her chemise from the top of the house to the bottom, and suffered no one to sleep during the remainder of the night. This, however, was the last time of my being troubled with this kind of noise.

"Seven or eight days after, while I was enjoying myself in my usual society, the clock struck eleven, and immediately the firing of a gun was heard against one of my windows. We were all sensible of it ; we saw the fire, and heard the shot ; but, upon examining the window, we found it had received no kind of damage. We concluded that some person had a design upon my life ; and that, having failed, it was necessary to guard against any future attempt of a similar nature. The Intendant went directly to the house of M. de Marville, the Lieutenant of the Police, who was his friend. He came, attended by the proper officers, and examined the house opposite mine, but without discovering the least ground for suspicion. The following day, the street was narrowly watched—the Officers of Police had their eyes upon every house, but, notwithstanding their attention, the same discharge was always heard at the same hour for three months, against the same pane of glass, though no one could ever discover from whence it proceeded. This fact is attested by all Registers of Police.

"I became so accustomed to this new trick of the spirit, that I scarcely paid any attention to it ; and one evening, at the hour of eleven, when it was extremely warm, I opened the window, and, with the Intendant, seated myself in the balcony. The instant the clock struck eleven, the gun was discharged as usual, and we

both fell upon the floor apparently lifeless. When we came to ourselves, and found we were not hurt, and acknowledged to each other that, at the moment the gun was fired, we had each of us received a violent slap on the face, we could scarcely refrain from laughing. The next day nothing particular happened; but the day after, I was invited by Mademoiselle Dumesnil to an entertainment she gave. I entered a coach at eleven o'clock, with my waiting-woman. The moon shone bright, and we proceeded along the Boulevards, or suburbs, which were just beginning to be built upon. We were surveying the houses which had been lately erected, when my waiting-woman said, 'Is it not here that M. de S— died?'—'From the information I received, that should be the place,' replied I, pointing with my finger to a house which was before us. The report of a gun was immediately heard. The coachman urged on his horses, conceived himself to be attacked by robbers, and arrived at the place of rendezvous nearly insensible. For my own part, I was impressed with a degree of terror, which it was long before I got the better of. This was the last time I was terrified by the firing of the gun.—(Continued in our next.)

Interesting Varieties.

THE SOLDIER'S NOSE.

A CUTTING STORY.

IN the year of our Lord 1797, the wife of a soldier, belonging to a militia regiment encamped at Brighton, in defiance of all articles of war, frequently presumed to quarrel with the superior officer, her husband. Her mother, speaking of her disposition, would allow she was a great spirit, which translated into plain English, means a precious vixen. This woman of spirit took it into her head not only to submit her husband to the disciplina lingua (alias tongue banging), but also to bestow on him, from time to time, such corporal punish-

ment (although he was but a private) as the nature and degree of his offences seemed to merit. Becoming more insubordinate, she at last was so mutinous, as to break another formidable article of war, which denounces a terrific penalty against all those who draw, or offer to draw, or lift up any weapon of offence, against a superior. Not having the fear of this, nor any other article, before her eyes, this woman of spirit, one day at dinner, snatched up a knife, and in a fit of fury seized her husband by the throat, and cut his nose off! When this circumstance was made public, every body agreed the woman was wrong; and the commanding officer was so fully satisfied of it, that he condemned her to be drummed out of the regiment the next morning. When the woman heard the sentence, being grievously afflicted, she determined to execute a project that has been successfully performed by numberless great heroines and celebrated beauties in all times and countries: she sought her judge, and falling on her knees, with tears, entreaties, lamentations, and most solemn promises of reformation, strove to move his pity. The commandant, a man of genuine goodness and humanity, not only suffered himself to be thus supplicated, but allowed himself to pity a woman who lay prostrate at his feet,—blowing the dust off his boots with gusts of contrite sighs, and washing the rust off the rowels of his spurs with floods of penitential tears. "Woman," said he, "you have been guilty of a very barbarous and cruel action."—"O! sir, I am sensible of my misconduct."—"You have cut off your husband's nose!"—"I know I have, sir," replied the woman, "but if your honor will be kind enough to excuse my being 'drummed out of the regiment, I promise I will never do so any more!" The officer relying on the woman's word forgave her; nor had he any reason to repent this act of lenity. The woman performed her promise, for it is a well-known fact, that she never did cut off her husband's nose any more!

THE
EXECUTIONER OF CHARLES I.

SIR,—The article upon this subject, in your last number, is interesting, but bears too romantic a character to be readily received as authentic: and, moreover, leaves us as much in the dark as ever upon the main point of enquiry, i. e. the executioner's name. Whether your readers will think that the subjoined relation is more deserving of belief, or throws any additional light upon the mysterious question, remains to be seen. I transcribed it from a MS. memorandum-book, formerly belonging to the Rev. Edward Robson, Curate of Whitechapel, which I purchased at the sale of his library four years since. It has already been once printed, but the circulation of the work in which it appeared was so extremely limited, that it is still, as Coleridge says, "almost as good as manuscript."

STAFFORDIENSIS.

27th January, 1823.

That the executioner of Charles I. performed his office in a mask, assisted by another man, is an acknowledged fact; but, who the actual person was who beheaded that monarch, is not so well known. Some were of opinion at the time, that Col. Joice was the executioner; and a man of the name of Hulet was tried and condemned on the 15th of October, 1660, for having been one of those who appeared on the scaffold. (See 'State Trials,' Vol. II. p. 381. A small work, in 2 vols. 12mo. intitled 'The Tell Tale,' lately fell into my hands, in which the executioner is called Richard Brandon.* I extract the substance of what this little book asserts. It says, that when Brandon heard the sentence pronounced against the King, he made a solemn vow never to appear on the scaffold to do the act, or lift his hand against him. That having been prevailed upon to violate his oath, he was seized with an agony of mind,

which remained till his death. That he received for his trouble thirty pounds, paid him in half-crowns; and that he took from the King's pocket an orange stuck with cloves, and a handkerchief. After selling the orange for ten shillings, he returned home to his wife, in Rosemary Lane, about six o'clock at night, and gave her what he had earned. That he fell sick soon after, and died in a most deplorable manner. That the Sheriff of London sent in great store of wine for his funeral; but, that the indignation of the people was so violent, that they would scarcely suffer his body to be interred. At length, however, he was, with great difficulty, carried to Whitechapel church-yard, and there buried; and finally, that the man who waited upon him when he gave the fatal stroke, was a ragman in Rosemary Lane.

Now, in order to ascertain, as far as possible, the authenticity of this narration, I had the curiosity to examine the register of burials at Whitechapel, to see whether or no such a man was really buried there at that time. The following entry goes far to prove that the above circumstantial account is no fiction:—

'Parish of St. Mary Matfellow, otherwise Whitechapel—Burials in June, An. Dom. 1649:

'21st. Richard Brandon, a Man out of Rosemary Lane.'

I made this extract Feb. 11th. 1782.

Mem. The register-book is not in the chest with the other volumes, but is in the custody of the churchwarden, and is kept in the locker in the vestry; being called the Plague Book, because the register of the burials of those who died in 1665, of the plague, is contained in it. I have counted 72 burials in one day, recorded in it.

** January 19th, 1783, being at this time Curate of Whitechapel, whither I came Feb. 17th, 1781.—E. ROBSON.

A SHORT STORY, TOLD BY
MR. MATHEWS.

"My friend and myself, when in Devonshire, were visiting an acquaint-

* Brandon was the common executioner at that time, and died June 20th, 1649, within six months after the King's murder.

ance, who had a daughter, not remarkable either for her wit, beauty, or accomplishments. She had passed the grand climacteric, and was certainly on the wane; but her heart had lost none of its susceptibility to la grand passion. She had for ten years been conspicuous for her dress, airs, and "beau catchers;" but, alas! she had 'toiled all night' at balls, routs, and levees, but had caught no beau. Being as vain as she was simple, we thought her fair game for a quiz. "Miss Lucretia Elvira," said I, "have you heard of the late act of parliament, by which all ladies with small mouths shall be allowed to marry two husbands?"—"No, sir," said she (SCREWING UP HER MOUTH INTO A PUCKER). "What a curis law!"—"You are wrong, Edward," said my friend to me, "those ladies with large mouths are to be allowed two husbands."—"LAW ME!" exclaimed she (opening her mouth as big as a bucket), "What a curious law!"

HONEY A CURE FOR THE GRAVEL.

A number of years ago, says a correspondent, I was much afflicted with the gravel, and twice in serious danger from small stones lodging in the passage. I met with a gentleman who had been in my situation and had got rid of that disorder by sweetening his tea with half honey and half sugar. I adopted this remedy and found it effectual. After being fully clear of my disease about ten years, I declined taking honey, and in about three months, I had a violent fit of my old complaint. I then renewed my practice of taking honey in my tea, and am now more than three score and ten, and have not, for the last twenty seven years, had the smallest symptom of the gravel. I have recommended my prescription to many of my acquaintance, and have never known it fail.

BOOK PRINTING.—The following nineteen occupations are engaged to, produce a single book:—the author,

the designer, the rag-merchant, the paper-maker, the stationer, the type-founder, the press-maker, the ink-maker, the pelt-maker, the chase-maker, the compositor, the pressman, the gatherer, the folder, the stitcher, the leather-seller, the binder, the copper-smith, the engraver, the copper-plate printer, and the bookseller.—
DEM. PR.

The Wit's Nunchion.

HENRY JONES.—It was rather remarkable, that on the very day this writer sent his tragedy of the "Earl of Essex" to the Manager of Covent Garden Theatre, Dr. Philip Francis also sent his tragedy of "Constantine." This somewhat embarrassed the manager, as to which he should bring out first. Jones's friends (and they were powerful in point of rank and numbers), pleaded the originality of his genius, and the pressure of his circumstances: but Francis disregarded these representations, and insisted that he had an equal claim. The manager felt the justice of this, and after ruminating for some time, proposed that they should toss up for the priority. The parties consented, and whilst the shilling was spinning in the air, Jones, who had been bred a bricklayer, cried out "Woman!" by the grossest epithet he could make use of. He was successful, and the Doctor turned away in disgust, affecting to be more hurt at the indelicacy of his rival than his own ill-fortune.

SHERIDAN, the grandfather of Brinsley, was a clergyman, and through his friend Swift procured a living in the South of Ireland, which he set out to take possession of, but, by an act of inadvertence, destroyed all his expectations of rising further in the church; for being at Cork on the first of August, the anniversary of the accession of George the First, he preached a sermon, which had for its text, "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." On this being known, he was struck off the list of chaplains to the Lord Lieutenant, and forbidden the castle.

A fashionable lady, asking a young nobleman which he thought the prettiest flowers, roses or tulips, he replied, with great gallantry, "Your ladyship's two lips before all the roses in the world."

RICH AND FOOTE.—The education of Rich, manager of Lincoln's Inn Fields and Covent Garden Theatres, had been grossly neglected, consequently, though he had a good understanding, his language was vulgar and ungrammatical. He had contracted a strange and rude habit of calling every body Mister, which gave rise to an unmannerly bon mot by Foote. Rich having called him Mister several times, Foote grew warm, and asked him the reason of his not calling him by his name. "Don't be angry," said Rich, "for I sometimes forget my own name." "That's extraordinary," replied Foote, "for though I knew you could not write it, I did not suppose you could forget it."

MR. HAYMAN having exhibited a miserable picture of Peter denying Christ, a wag observed, that he thought any one would have denied such a Christ!

Dr. Franklin used to say, that "rich widows were the only species of second hand goods that sold at prime cost."

INDIAN VIRTUE.—A married woman, of the Shawance Indians, made this beautiful reply to a man whom she met in the woods, and who implored her to love and look on him. "Oulaman, my husband," said she, "who is forever before my eyes, hinders me from seeing you."

The following is a literal copy of a medical certificate:—"to the overseers of gadleygrene this is to certify that Thumus Bowers his not Kualefyd for eney imploiment his Kunnepilent is A Kunsunshin."

LORD ROCHESTER.—A strange animal, which in its nature had a mixture of the cat and the rat, being

discovered in the reign of Charles the Second, was the subject of much conversation; and the king happening to hear of it, enquired at the levee if any nobleman present had seen it? Rochester replied in the affirmative, and upon his Majesty asking for a description of it,—“Sire,” said the Earl, “it is superior to a rat, as touching its cathood; and inferior to a cat, as touching its rathood.”

A lady, some time back, on a visit to the British Museum, asked the person in attendance if they had a skull of Oliver Cromwell? Being answered in the negative, “Dear me,” said she, “that’s very strange; they have one at Oxford.”

A clergyman preaching in the vicinity of Wapping, and observing that most part of his audience were in the seafaring way, embellished his discourse with several nautical tropes and figures. Amongst other things, he advised them to be ever on the watch, so that on whatsoever tack the evil one should bear down upon them, he might be crippled in action. “Aye, master,” muttered a jolly son of Neptune, “but let me tell you, that will depend upon your having the weather-gage of him.”

TO THE READER.

The cut which we have the pleasure of presenting to our Readers in this No. contains, it will be seen, nothing complicated or energetic; but though simple in its nature, we trust it possesses sufficient of the picturesque and beautiful to render it interesting.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Ancient Vessel in our next. We are sorry its length prevented us from inserting it in this number, especially as it appears to be a better solution of the probable manner in which it became buried, than what has hitherto been advanced.

We have received many communications, most of which, in due time, will find a place in the Nic-Nac; particularly ND, whose friendly hints and contributions we shall always be most happy to receive.

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THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o XI.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1823.

PRICE 1d.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NIC-NAC.

SIR,—There is a passage in the new romance, called *Peveril of the Peak*, upon which many of its readers will doubtless require a commentary. It runs thus:—

"He (Buckingham) lived in an age when what was called gallantry warranted the most atrocious actions of deceit and violence, as may be best illustrated by the catastrophe of an unfortunate actress, whose beauty attracted the attention of the last De Vere, Earl of Oxford. While her virtue defied his seductions, he ruined her under colour of a mock-marriage,* and was rewarded for a success which occasioned the death of his victim, by the general applause of the men of wit and gallantry who filled the drawing-room of Charles the Second."—Vol. 4, page 69.

The actress here alluded to is Mrs. Marshall, who was a leading female performer after the Restoration; and is supposed by Malone and others to have been the first woman that ever appeared on the English stage. Her history is told in the following extract from Count de Grammont's *Memoirs*, 1714, page 246:—

"The Earl of Oxford fell in love with a handsome, graceful player, who acted to perfection; but she, being strictly virtuous, rejected all his addresses and presents. This unexpected resistance still more inflaming his passion, he had recourse to stratagem, and in the first place offered to give her a promise of marriage, signed in due form with his own hand, on condition that she would submit to

his wishes; but finding that she refused to accede to this proposal, he went next morning to her lodgings, with a parson and another man, and in presence of whom, and one of her fellow-players, they were married and so forth. Soon after, however, it turned out that the pretended parson was one of my lord's trumpeters, and the witness his kettle-drummer, who was sent out of the way as soon as the ceremony was over; and as for the other witness, she was fac'd down that her friend merely fancied she was married in some part of a play. 'Twas to no purpose that the poor abused creature threw herself at the king's feet, and prayed for redress; she was obliged to resume her old name, instead of being called Countess of Oxford, and to console herself for the wrong she had suffered by the receipt of a pension of 300*l.* per annum, which his majesty compelled the earl to settle upon her."

The incident of the lady's death in consequence of the deceit, seems to have been added by the novelist to deepen the pathos of the narrative, for I do not find that our stage-histories mention any such catastrophe.

BOTTOM OF A WELL,

TRUTH.

6th. February, 1823.

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 75.)

Major Bridgenorth, on his return to Derbyshire, regretting that he could not expect the indirect news of his daughter's health, which Sir Geoffrey used to communicate in his almost daily call, reflected that it would be in every respect becoming that he should pay a personal visit at Martindale Castle, carry thither the remem-

* The writer has not expressed his meaning very correctly. The actress was ruined under colour of a REAL marriage, and not of a mock ceremony.

branches of the knight to his lady, assure her of his health, and satisfy himself respecting that of his daughter, and accordingly contrived to pay many of the most friendly visits to Lady Peveril. During this neighbourly intercourse, Peveril of the Peak had directed his lady to invite the whole honest men of the neighbourhood to make good cheer at Martindale Castle, in honour of the blessed restoration of his most sacred majesty. This caused Bridgenorth great uneasiness, as regarded himself and the Presbyterians: but, after much discussion with Lady Peveril, it was settled that each party should celebrate the festival in separate apartments of the castle in their own way.

On the morning succeeding the feast, the Lady Peveril, fatigued with the exertions and the apprehensions of the former day, kept her apartment for two or three hours later than her own active habits rendered usual. Meanwhile, Mistress Ellesmere, a person of great trust in the family, and who assumed much authority in her mistress's absence, laid her orders upon Deborah, the gouvernante, immediately to carry the children to their airing in the park, and not to let any one enter the gilded chamber, which was usually their sporting-place. Deborah, who often rebelled, and sometimes successfully, against the deputed authority of Ellesmere, privately resolved that it was about to rain, and that the gilded chamber was a more suitable place for the children's exercise than the wet grass of the park on a raw morning.

The little Julian was careering about the room for the amusement of his infant friend, as well as his own, when, on a sudden, he observed one of the pannelled compartments of the leather hangings slide apart, so as to shew a fair hand, with its fingers resting upon its edge, prepared, it would seem, to push it still farther back. Julian was much surprised, and somewhat frightened, at what he witnessed, for the tales of the nursery had strongly impressed on his mind the terrors of the invisible world.

The pannel, on which his eye was fixed, gradually continued to slide back, and display more and more of the form to which the hand appertained, until, in the dark aperture which was disclosed, the children saw the figure of a lady in a mourning dress, past the meridian of life, but whose countenance still retained traces of great beauty, although the predominant character both of her features and person was an air of almost royal dignity.

The stately lady advanced to Julian, and said, "Are not you the little Peveril?"

"Yes," said the boy, reddening, not altogether without a juvenile feeling of that rule of chivalry which forbade any one to disown his name, whatever danger might be annexed to the avowal of it.

"Then," said the stately stranger, "go to your mother's room, and tell her to come instantly to speak with me."

"I wo't not," said the little Julian.

"How!" said the lady,—"so young and so disobedient! Why will you not go, my pretty boy, when I ask it of you as a favour?"

"Because," answered Julian, firmly, "if I go, little Alice must stay alone with you."

"You are a gallant fellow," said the lady, "and will not disgrace your blood, which never left the weak without protection."

The boy understood her not, and still gazed with anxious apprehension, first on her who addressed him, and then on his little companion, whose eyes, with the vacant glance of infancy, wandered from the figure of the lady to that of her companion and protector, and at length, infected by a portion of the fear which the latter's unanimous efforts could not entirely conceal, flew into Julian's arms, and clinging to him, greatly augmented his alarm, and, by screaming aloud, rendered it very difficult for him to avoid the sympathetic fear which impelled him to do the same.

While the stranger lady and the children thus confronted each other, Major Bridgenorth and Lady Peveril

entered almost at the same instant, but from different doors, whose haste shewed that they had been alarmed by the children's cries.—(Continued on page 89.)

GHOST STORIES.

No. II.

A sad tale is best for winter;
I have one of ghosts and spirits:—
I'll tell it softly—YOU CRITIC shall not hear it.
SHAKESPEARE.

(Concluded from Page 76.)

"It was, however, succeeded by a noise like the clapping of hands. The partiality of the public had so long accustomed me to this interruption, that I for some time paid no attention to it. My friends remarked it, and told me they constantly heard it at eleven o'clock, close to my door; they could, however, distinguish no one, and were convinced that what they heard must be the result of some supernatural cause.

"As the noise had nothing terrible in it, I did not observe what length of time it continued. It was followed by melodious sounds, which I paid as little attention to. It seemed as if a celestial voice sung the most tender and pathetic airs: the music commenced at the corner of the street, and concluded at the door of my house. Like all the preceding sounds, it baffled discovery of the cause.—About the end of two years I ceased to be disturbed altogether.

"The house I inhabited was extremely noisy, on account of its proximity to the market, and the number of people who lived in that quarter. I needed retirement, as well on account of my studies as of my health, which was much impaired. I was in rather easy circumstances, and wished for a better situation. I was told of a small house in La Rue des Marais, which let for 200 livres, and in which Racine was said to have lived forty years with his family. I was informed it was there that he had composed the greater part of his immortal works, and that there he had died; that afterwards it had been occupied by the

tender Leconvreux, who had ornamented and ended his days in it. The walls of this house, said I, will be alone sufficient to make me feel the sublimity of the author, and acquire the talents necessary for an actress; it is in this sanctuary I will live and die. I took it, and put up a bill in the apartments I before had occupied. Among the number of those who applied for them, were several persons attracted solely by curiosity to see me out of the theatre; but, I was so far from gratifying them that I studiously kept myself concealed. I was, however, one day informed that an old lady had called to view the apartments, and that she particularly wished to see me. It has ever been my principle to pay the greatest attention to age, and I accordingly waited upon her. An impulse, which I endeavoured in vain to account for, made me survey her minutely from head to foot. This emotion increased, when I perceived that she experienced the same feeling with regard to me. I was only able to falter out a request that she would be seated; she accepted my offer. We continued for some time silent, but our eyes plainly discovered the extreme desire we felt to address each other. She knew who I was, but with her I was unacquainted: she felt that the task of breaking silence was imposed upon her. The following was what passed between us:—

"'For a long period, madam,' said she, 'I have been impressed with the utmost anxious desire to become acquainted with you. As I never frequent the theatre, and am not known to any of those whom you honor with your friendship, I was apprehensive that if I addressed you by letter, I might subject myself to a denial, in consequence of my motives being misunderstood. The bill placed upon your apartments has procured me the opportunity I have so long wished for, but I trust you will pardon when I confess that it was not a wish to hire your house which brought me here—a desire to become acquainted with you, was my only inducement.'

"'It appears to me, madam,' re-

plied I, 'that it is a duty which I owe to myself to enquire who you are, and what your business is with me? I cannot brook being made the sport of any one.—Speak, or I shall leave you.'

" 'I was, madam, the friend of M. de S—, and the only person he suffered to be with him during the last moments of his life. We have passed days and weeks in speaking of you; sometimes as an angel, sometimes as a devil.—I continually persuading him to forget you, he constantly declaring that he should adore you to the grave. His passion and his despair gradually undermined his constitution; he rapidly approached the termination of his existence, and your last refusal to see him, materially hastened his dissolution. On that evening he counted every minute till half-past ten, when his servant informed him that you positively would not come to him; after a moment's silence, he took my hand in a paroxysm of despair, which terrified me, and exclaimed—Cruel woman! but she shall not escape me.—I will pursue her as assiduously after my death, as I have during my life—I endeavoured to calm him, but he had ceased to exist'

"I need not tell you, my friend, what an effect these last words had upon me. It appeared as if all the powers of heaven and hell had united to torment me; but, at length, time and reason have restored me to tranquillity. 'If,' said I, 'there be no Superior Being who regulates the affairs of the world, it is impossible that he who is dead should be restored to life, and sent again into this abode of misery and sorrow, after being once released from it. What am I, that I should suppose the Supreme Being would concern himself with so humble an individual, who is less, perhaps, in his eyes, than a grain of sand is in ours? Let us adore him, let us merit his mercies, but not attempt to scrutinize his ways.'

"This mode of reasoning, and various other reflections which occurred to me, led me to attribute the extraordinary circumstances which had befallen me, entirely to accident. I do not

assert for certainty that they were so produced; but it cannot be denied that what is called CHANCE, has the greatest influence on what passes in the world.

Interesting Varieties.

SOLAR ECLIPSES.

The following are all the eclipses of the sun that will be visible in Great Britain this century, the quantity of which exceeds eight digits.*

	digits.
May 15, 1836, at 3 in the afternoon,	9½
July 8, 1842, at 6 in the morning,	10
Oct. 9, 1847, at 8 in the do.	11½
July 28, 1853, at 1 in the afternoon,	9½
May 15, 1858, at 1 in the do.	10½
July 28, 1860, at 3 in the do.	9½
March 6, 1867, at 9 in the morning,	9½
Dec. 22, 1870, at noon,	10½

* A digit is the twelfth part of the apparent diameter of the sun or moon.

J. R.

THE ANCIENT VESSEL.

SIR,—There having been much of speculation, as to the age of the ancient ship lately discovered in the old bed of the River Rother, near Matham in Kent, and also as to the country to which she belonged, I felt considerable anxiety for the opening of the exhibition room (which is situate on the Surrey side of Waterloo Bridge) in order that I might be enabled to form some judgment as to the probable correctness of any one of the variety of opinions which have been broached upon this interesting subject. Perhaps, then, some observations connected with her form and build may not be unacceptable to those of your readers, who may wish to see this relic of antiquity, but whose habits of thinking may not lead them to judge of its age, from their want of knowledge of the progress and peculiarities of naval architecture.

To ascertain the date of her submersion, from the articles found in her, would be a hopeless task; that they are sufficiently rude to stamp her with high antiquity is certain; but this may have arisen from the poverty of the commander of the vessel, rather

than the state of the manufactures of the country to which she belonged at the time she sunk. The fashion also of the wearing apparel (shoes) has, too, been brought forward to prove her age; but fashion is so arbitrary, as it concerns times and countries, that nothing can be gathered from this approaching to certainty. We must then consult the local history of the spot where she was found, consider the probable cause of her loss, and the peculiarities of her construction, in order to give some clue to her age, and the country to which she belonged.

It is on record, that in the year 1287, a violent storm and flood took place on the coasts of Kent and Sussex, which broke down the banks of the Rother, changed the course of that river, flooded the surrounding country, and, by this, destroyed the Town of Winchelsea.

The vessel in question having been found in a part of the river which, it is known, has not been navigable for some centuries, renders it probable that she suffered from the effects of this storm; by being driven about and then striking on some hard substance, a hole was made in her bottom; that she was wrecked is evident from this circumstance, as well as from the skeleton remains of human beings, and other animals found in her (which are exhibited in glass cases). To render this opinion the more probable, it is hardly to be doubted, if she had been sunk when that part of the river continued to be navigable, means would have been employed to raise her, to prevent the navigation being stopped by the wreck. We may, therefore, I think, fairly conclude that she had remained in that situation, whence she has been taken, from, at least, 1287.

Before I attempt to draw any conclusions from her build, it will be better to state her dimensions and form. She is 78 feet 8 inches long, and 15 feet broad; the head and stern are nearly alike, being round; she has a flat bottom, without a keel, and her sides incline outwards. When it is considered that she had but one mast,

and, probably, no bowsprit, it must be evident, from her great length and comparative want of breadth, that she could not be employed on long sea voyages. But there are some peculiarities in her construction which shew that she was a Dutch or Flemish vessel, and probably employed in TRADE. Her narrow breadth seems to point out that she was so constructed to pass easily into the dykes; she has transoms, or horizontal timbers, both in the head and in the stern, a method of construction peculiar to the Dutch; and she is caulked with moss, a practice which has existed from time immemorial, and which now exists among the people.

The planks of this vessel are, in some instances, 19 feet in length, and 2 feet 7 inches in breadth. This has induced persons to believe that the timber whence they were converted was chesnut; but their blackened state, from the union of iron with gallic acid, proves that they are oak.

From the foregoing circumstances we may come to the conclusion, that the vessel in question is Dutch, built of oak, and that she probably foundered in the year 1287. It is to be remarked, however, that conjecture may carry, with some plausibility, her age much farther back; hence some persons have considered her a Roman galley; and, in a pamphlet which is sold at the place of exhibition, it is conjectured that she was one of the Danish fleet which was defeated by Alfred, and some of the ships wrecked, in the year 893.

To the mind that can grasp and apply old objects to new purposes, it will become a question whether the comparative dimensions and form of this ancient vessel are not, in our times, admirably adapted to a steam boat.

A. B.

FIDELITY OF A DOG.—An affecting anecdote was recently recorded in the French papers. A young man took a dog into a boat, rowed to the centre of the Seine, and threw the animal over, with intent to drown him; the poor dog often tried to climb up the side of the boat, but his master as often

pushed him back, till, overbalancing himself, he fell overboard. As soon as the faithful dog saw his master in the stream he left the boat, and held him above water till help arrived from the shore, and his life was saved.

AN AFFAIR OF HONOR, A SOVEREIGN CURE FOR THE DROPSY.—An intelligent traveller informs us that, some time since, a Dr. Blanchard, of Alexandria, on Red River, challenged a Mr. Murray, an attorney, on some trivial account, who, at the time, was laboring under an abdominal dropsy. They met in the province of Texas, and Murray was shot through the belly. The dropsical matter was discharged, and the bowels, from the inflammation excited by the wound, adhering to the peritoneum, a permanent cure was accomplished. The parties became friends, and the attorney remains grateful to the doctor for this gratuitous surgical operation. We know of no law against shedding water, though there is one against shedding blood. If our medical colleges approve of this mode, it is to be hoped the candidates for M. D. will be carefully examined as to their skill in this novel mode of operation.

We believe it is a fact generally known to medical men, that the intentional excitement of such a degree of inflammation upon the peritoneum as should be sufficient to produce adhesion between its surface, has, in one or two instances, succeeded in curing abdominal dropsy.

A PARODY BY AN ATTORNEY.

TO cheat, or not to cheat, that's the question,
Whether 'tis better in the mind to suffer
The stings and gnawings of a troubled conscience,
Or bravely scorn corruption's gilded baits,
And by ejecting 'scape them? To cheat,
to need,
No more; and, by such gain, to say we
end
The thousand hardships which the poor
seems
To be born heir to; 'tis a consumma-
tion

Too often wished by us : to cheat un-
seen—

To cheat—perchance be caught; ay
there's the rub;

For by discovery what shame may come,
When we have lost the necessary mask
Must give us pause; there's the respect
That makes dishonesty embitter life:

For who would bear the gibes and taunts
of men,

Th' oppressed's curse, the good man's
contumely,

The pangs of unpaid fees, the law's se-
verity

In taxing bills, and the harsh reprimands
That merit often to th' unworthy gives

When he in peace might his quietus
make

Upon a poor farm? Who would long
parchments write,

And scrawl and pause amidst a heap of
nonsense?

But that the dread of ghastly poverty,
Whose horrid visage, like the gorgon's

head,
No mortal dares behold, startles the
mind,

And makes us rather chose those ills we
have

Than suffer others that we dread far
worse.

Thus avarice makes rascals of us all,
And thus the comely face of honesty
Is tarnish'd o'er by ill-designing knaves
Who toil'd among the labyrinths of law
In search of matter to perplex mankind,
And leave the paths of wisdom.

The Wit's Nunchion.

AN Irish gentleman was bestowing great praise on a telescope he had purchased: "Observe," said he to a friend, "that church, it is exactly half a mile distant, but by means of my telescope, I can bring it so near that I can HEAR the organ play."

DR. PITCAIRN's way of asking for a pinch of snuff:—"Madam, permit me to emerge the summits of my digitals in your pulveriferous utensil, to excite a grateful titillation in my olfactory nerves."

AT the breaking up of a tavern dinner party, two of the company fell down stairs, the one tumbling to the first landing place, the other rolling

to the bottom. It was observed that the first seemed dead drunk. "Yes," said a wag, "but he's not so FARGONE as the gentleman below."

street with his tray, chanced to run against a lady, who pettishly exclaimed, "Duce take the tray!" "No," replied the boy, "the tray will take the duce!"

A nobleman of Gascony (for all Gascons are noblemen,) complaining that his pumps did last long enough, the humble shoemaker asked him of what stuff his lordship should like to have them made. "Make the vamp," said he, "of the throat of a choriscer—the quarter, of the skin of a wolf's neck—and the sole, of a woman's tongue." The astonished Crispin made bold with a second question, in the shape of a timid and hesitating "Pourquoi?" "Why, you block-head!" replied the wag, "because the first never admits water—the second, because it never bends on either side—and the last because, though always in motion, it never wears out."

THE late Mr. Curran was once standing with a friend at the corner of a street, discussing the merits of different carriages, when one preferred one, and one another; at length a hearse drove by, when he instantly exclaimed, "Ah, my dear boy, that's the carriage AFTER ALL."

A clergyman giving for his text the following words: "In my father's house are many mansions," which he many times repeated, an old man belonging to his congregation stood up and replied, "Many mansions in your father's house! I knew your father's house before you was born, and it consisted just of a kitchen and a bedroom."

A fellow, who loved laughing better than his meat, put a number of rams' horns in a basket, and went up and down the streets at the west end of the town, crying "new fruit, new fruit, ho!" Lord Jersey, hearing the noise, put his head out of his drawing-room window, and asked the fellow to show him his fruit, which having looked at, he asked him if he was not ashamed thus to disturb a quiet neighbourhood; for, "who the devil," says the peer, "do you think will buy horns?" "Well, master," replied the fellow, "do not put yourself in a passion; though you are provided, I may meet with OTHER men that are not!"

DRAMATIC EFFECT.—It is related in the annals of the stage, as a remarkable instance of the force of imagination, that when Bank's play of the Earl of Essex was last performed, a soldier, who stood sentinel on the stage, entered so deeply into the distress of the scene, that, in the delusion of his imagination, upon the Countess of Nottingham's denying the receipt of the ring which Essex had sent by her to the queen, to claim a promise of favor, he exclaimed, "'Tis false! she has it in her bosom;" and immediately seized the mock countess to make her deliver it up.

A young student, shewing the Museum in Oxford to a set of gentlemen and ladies, among other things produced a rusty sword; "This," said he, "gentlemen, is the sword with which Balaam was going to kill his ass," upon which one of the company replied, that he thought Balaam had no sword, but only wished for one.—"You are right," said the student; "and this is the very sword he wished for."

WILKES's dislike of the Scotch was notorious; and though he was very fond of Boswell, he never concealed this prejudice before him; but seemed to seize, with peculiar avidity, every opportunity to play upon Boswell, at the expence of his country. "You must acknowledge, my friend Wilkes," said Boswell one day, "that the approach to Edinburgh from the London road presents a very picturesque and interesting view."—"Why so it perhaps may," returned Wilkes; "but when I was there, the wind was in my

A butcher's boy walking along the

face, and it brought with it such a confounded stink, that I was obliged to keep my handkerchief to my nose, the whole of the way, and could see nothing of the prospect."

There was a heavy Lord Mayor in Wilkes's time, named Burnell, who, by persevering steadily in the pursuit of one object accumulated a splendid fortune, and rose progressively from the dignity of common-councilman, to the state coach, and the mansion house; though his first appearance in life was as a common bricklayer. At one of Old Bailey dinners, his lordship, after a most sumptuous repast on turbot and venison, was eating an immense quantity of butter with his cheese. "Why, brother," said Wilkes, "you lay it on with a trowel."

THE POETICAL LANDLORD.—A gentleman coming to town from Seven Oaks, in Kent, observed on a sign in the road, the following lines, which, on enquiry, he found to be the offspring of the landlord's brain:—

I John Stubbs liveth here,
Sells good Brandy, Gin and Beer:

speak so loud that all the town may hear her.

A COMPARISON.—It is with narrow-souled people, as with narrow-necked bottles, the less they have in them the more noise they make in pouring it out.

FRIENDSHIP.—Real friends are like ghosts and apparitions, what many people talk of, but few ever saw.

LOGIC has been compared to a spider's web, which exhibits more art than solidity; to a lobster, in which there is more picking than eating; to a faggot of thorns, which prick on all sides; and to a fish full of bones.

An old man marrying may be compared to a newly-born kid, which either dies or bears horns in the course of a year.

A gentleman, once entering a room where there were several females, began to descant very loudly upon the persons of two ladies he had just quitted. He remarked that one was the loveliest creature he had ever met with in the whole course of his life; but was immediately interrupted by one of the ladies present, telling him that he should always except the present company. "O certainly, ma'am," replied the gentleman, and instantly remarked that the other was the ugliest old woman he had ever seen, except the present company.

Dean Swift made himself manv

ceived much interesting matter from various Correspondents, too numerous to particularize; but as it is solely owing to want of room that none at present is inserted, we request they will not feel themselves neglected.

Printed and Published by T. WALLIS, Camden Town; and Sold by all Bookellers and Newsmen, in Town and Country.—Price One Penny.

THE NIC-NAO;

OR,

CRACLE OF KNOWLEDGE:

N^o. XII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1823. PRICE 1d:

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



SIR GEOFFREV PEVERIL UNHORSEING MAJOR BRIDGENORTH.

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

Continued from page 83.

LADY Peveril gazed on her unexpected guest, as if dubious whether she did or did not recognize, in her still beautiful though wasted and emaciated features, a countenance which she had known well under far different circumstances:

The stranger seemed to understand her cause of hesitation; for she said in that heart-thrilling voice which was peculiarly her own, "Time and misfortune have changed me much, Margaret—that every mirror tells me—yet, methinks Margaret Stanley might still have known Charlotte de la Tremouille."

The Lady Peveril was little in the custom of giving way to sudden emotion, but in the present case she threw herself on her knees in a rapture of mingled joy and grief, and half embracing those of the stranger,

exclaimed, in broken language, "My kind, my noble benefactress—the princely Countess of Derby—the royal Queen in Man—could I doubt your voice, your features for a moment—O, forgive, forgive me!"

The Countess raised the suppliant kinswoman of her husband's house, with all the grace of one accustomed from early birth to receive homage and to grant protection. She kissed the Lady Peveril's forehead, and passed her hand in a careless manner over her face as she said, "You too are changed, my fair cousin, but it is a change becomes you, from a pretty timid maiden to a sage and comely matron. But my own memory, which I once held a good one, has failed me strangely, if this gentleman be Sir Geoffrev Peveril."

"A kind and good neighbour only,

madam," said Lady Peveril; "Sir Geoffrey is at Court."

"I understood so much," said the Countess of Derby, "when I arrived here last night."

"How, madam!" said Lady Peveril—"Did you arrive at Martindale Castle—at the house of Margaret Stanley, where you have such right to command, and did not announce your presence to her?"

"My lodging was well cared for by Ellesmere—your Ellesmere now, as she was formerly mine—she has acted as quarter-master ere now you know, and on a broader scale; you must excuse her—she had my positive order to lodge me in the most secret part of your castle—she obeyed orders in that, and I suppose also in sending you now hither."

"Indeed I have not seen her," said the lady, "and therefore was totally ignorant of a visit so joyful, so surprising."

"And I," said the Countess, "was equally surprised to find none but these beautiful children in the apartment where I thought I heard you moving. Your own darlings, I doubt not," continued she, looking at the children. "Margaret, Providence has blessed you."

"That is my son," said Lady Peveril, pointing to Julian, who stood devouring their discourse with greedy ear: "the little girl—I may call mine too." Major Bridgenorth, who had in the mean time again taken up his infant, and was engaged in caressing it, set it down as the Countess of Derby spoke, sighed deeply, and walked towards the oriel window. He was well aware that the ordinary rules of courtesy would have rendered it proper that he should withdraw entirely, or at least offer to do so; but he was not a man of ceremonious politeness, and he had a particular interest in the subjects on which the Countess's discourse was likely to turn, which induced him to dispense with ceremony. The ladies seemed indeed scarce to notice his presence.

After some conversation respecting her coming to Martindale Castle, a fugitive, and in concealment, the

Countess said, "You remember—you must have heard, for I think Margaret Stanley would not be indifferent to my fate—that after my husband's murder at Bolton, I took up the standard which he never dropped until his death, and displayed it with my own hand in our Sovereignty of Man."

"I did indeed hear so, madam," said the Lady Peveril; "and that you had bidden a bold defiance to the rebel government, even after all other parts of Britain had submitted to them. My husband, Sir Geoffrey, designed at one time to have gone to your assistance with some few followers; but we learned that the island had been surrendered to the Parliament party, and that you, dearest lady, were thrown into prison."

"But you heard not," said the Countess, "how that disaster befel me.—Margaret, I would have held out that island against the knaves as long as the sea continued to flow around it. Till the shoals which surround it had become safe anchorage—till its precipices had melted with the sunshine—till of all its strong abodes and castles not one stone remained upon another, would I have defended against these villainous hypocritical rebels, my dear husband's hereditary dominion. The little kingdom of Man should have been yielded only when not an arm was left to wield a sword, not a finger to draw a trigger in its defence. But treachery did what force could never have done. When we had foiled various attempts upon the island by open force—treason accomplished what Blake and Lawson, with their floating castles, had found an enterprize too hazardous—a base rebel, whom we had nursed in our own bosoms, betrayed us to the enemy. 'This wretch was named Christian—'

Major Bridgenorth started and turned towards the speaker, but instantly seemed to recollect himself, and again averted his face. The Countess proceeded, without noticing the interruption, which, however, rather surprised Lady Peveril, who was acquainted with her neighbour's general habits of indifference and apathy,

and therefore the more surprised at his testifying such sudden symptoms of interest.

"That," continued the Countess, "he should have headed the ruffians who broke suddenly into my apartment—immured me with my infants in one of my own castles, and assumed or usurped the tyranny of the island—that this should have been done by William Christian, my vassal, my servant, my friend, was a deed of ungrateful treachery, which even this age of treason will scarcely parallel!"

The Countess gave Lady Peveril the whole particulars of William Christian, the brother-in-law of Bridgenorth, having given Fairfax possession of the Isle of Man; and when Bridgenorth learned from the Countess her having ordered his execution, he became so enraged, that he ordered her under arrest.

"I shall not obey your arrest," said the Countess, composedly: "I was born to give, but not receive such orders."

The Countess and Lady Peveril were about to leave the apartment, when the Major placed himself betwixt them and the door, in a manner which shewed him determined to interrupt their passage; when the Lady Peveril, who thought she had already shewed more deference to him in this matter than her husband was likely to approve of, raised her voice, and called loudly on her steward, Whitaker.

"Let three of the men instantly take arms," said his lady; "bring them into the anti-room, and wait my farther orders."

The astonished Bridgenorth accordingly became a prisoner in the gilded chamber.—In the mean time Sir Geoffrey Peveril arrived, and hearing what had passed, he exclaimed, "Threaten! threaten the Countess of Derby and Man in my house! By heaven! the prick-eared slave shall answer it.—Where is he?" and when informed he quickly entered the chamber in which he expected to find his captive. But Bridgenorth had escaped through the sliding pannel, which, in the hurry of the moment,

had escaped the memory of Lady Peveril.

When Sir Geoffrey returned to the ladies, he informed them that there was a warrant from the council to arrest the Countess who he was determined to conduct to a place of safety.

The followers of Peveril were so well accustomed to the sound of "Boot and Saddle," that they were soon mounted and in order; and in all the form, and with some of the dignity of danger, proceeded to escort the Countess of Derby through the hilly and desert track of country which connects the frontier of the shire with the neighbouring county of Cheshire. The cavalcade moved with considerable precaution, which they had been taught by the discipline of the Civil Wars. They rode, as the Spanish proverb expresses it, "with the beard on the shoulder," looking around, that is, from time to time, and using every precaution to have the speediest knowledge of any pursuit which might take place.

When they had got some way on the road, Whitaker, who remained some distance in the rear, galloped to the main body with the displeasing tidings that they were pursued by half a score of horsemen, and better.

"Ride on briskly to Hartly-nick," said the Knight, "and there, with God's help, we will bide the knaves. Countess of Derby—one word and a short one—Farewell!—you must ride forward with Whitaker and another careful fellow, and let me alone to see that no one treads on your skirts."

As the pursuers rode briskly up, Sir Geoffrey called to them to halt. "Why how now, neighbour," said he, as if he had at that moment recognized Bridgenorth for the first time,—"what makes you ride so sharp this morning? Are you not afraid to harm your horse, or spoil your spurs?"

"Sir Geoffrey," said the Major, "I have no time for jesting—I am on the king's affairs.—To this at least you will pay regard," continued he, ordering his pursuivant to shew him the warrant.

"The same regard which you

would have paid to it a month back or so," said the Knight, tearing the warrant to shreds.

"Make way, Sir Geoffrey Peveril," said Bridgenorth, "or you will compel me to do that I may be sorry for."

"You will make no way here, but at your peril," said Sir Geoffrey.—

"I tell you, master, you shall neither violate the security of my house, nor pursue my friends over the grounds."

"Make room at your proper peril," said Bridgenorth; and he put his right hand on his holster-pistol. Sir Geoffrey closed with him instantly, seized him by the collar, and spurred Black Hastings, checking him at the same time, so that the horse made a courbette, and brought the full weight of his chest against the counter of the other. While, therefore, they tugged and grappled together upon terms which bore such little accordance with their long acquaintance and close neighbourhood, it was no wonder that Bridgenorth should be unhorsed with much violence. While Sir Geoffrey sprang from his saddle, the party of Bridgenorth advanced to rescue their leader, and that of the Knight to oppose them. Swords were unsheathed, and pistols presented; but Sir Geoffrey, with the voice of a herald, commanded both parties to stand back, and to keep the peace.

The pursuivant took the hint, and easily found a reason for not prosecuting a dangerous duty. "The warrant," he said, "was destroyed. They that did it must be answerable to the council."

Bridgenorth shook himself rather roughly free from the hands of Sir Geoffrey Peveril; but it was not to draw his sword. On the contrary, he mounted his horse with a sullen and dejected air; and, making a sign to his followers, turned back the same road which he had come.—(Continued on page 98)

NAPOLÉON'S CHARACTER OF HIMSELF.

FROM O'MEARA'S BOOK.

"NOTHING has been more simple than my elevation. It was not the

result of intrigue or crime. It was owing to the peculiar circumstances of the times, and because I fought successfully against the enemies of my country. What is most extraordinary, and I believe unparalleled in history, is, that I rose from being a private person to the astonishing height of power I possessed, without having committed a single crime to obtain it. If I were on my death-bed I could make the same declaration.

"While walking about the room, he asked, 'What sort of man did you take me to be, before you became my surgeon? What did you think of my character, and what I was capable of? Give me your real opinion frankly.'

I replied, I thought you to be a man, whose stupendous talents were only to be equalled by your measureless ambition, and though I did not give credit to one tenth part of the libels which I had read against you, still I believed that you would not hesitate to commit a crime, when you found it to be necessary, or thought it might be useful to you. 'This is just the answer that I expected,' replied Napoleon, 'and is perhaps the opinion of Lord Holland, and even of numbers of the French. I have risen to too great a pitch of human glory and elevation not to have excited the envy and jealousy of mankind. They will say, it is true that he has raised himself to the highest pinnacle of glory, mais pour y arriver, il commit beaucoup de crimes (but to attain it he has committed many crimes). Now the fact is, that I not only never committed any crimes, but I never even thought of doing so. J'ai toujours marche avec l'opinion de grandes masses et les evenemens (I have always gone with the opinion of great masses and with events). I have always made peu de cas of the opinion of individuals, of that of the public a great deal; of what use, then, would crime have been to me? I am too much a fatalist, and have always despised mankind too much, to have recouré to crime to frustrate their attempts. J'ai marche toujours avec l'opinion de cinq or six millions d'hommes (I have always marched with the opinion

of five or six millions of men); of what use, then, would crime have been to me?

“In spite of all the libels,” continued he, “I have no fear whatever about my fame. Posterity will do me justice. The truth will be known, and the good which I have done, with the faults which I have committed, will be compared. I am not uneasy for the result. Had I succeeded, I should have died with the reputation of the greatest man that ever existed. As it is, although I have failed, I shall be considered as an extraordinary man: my elevation was unparalleled, because unaccompanied by crime. I have fought fifty pitched battles, almost all of which I have gained. I have framed and carried into effect a code of laws, that will bear my name to the most distant posterity. From nothing I raised myself to the most powerful monarch in the world. Europe was at my feet. My ambition was great, I admit, but it was of a cold nature (*d’une nature froide*), and caused *par les evenemens* (by events), and the opinion that the sovereignty lay in the people. In fact, the Imperial government was a kind of republic. Called to the head of it by the voice of the nation, my maxim was *la carriere ouverte aux talents* (the career open to talents), without distinction of birth or fortune, and this system of equality is the reason that your oligarchy hate me so much.”

Interesting Varieties.

* SIR,—There is a common saying, that “travellers see strange things;” it is evident that those who journey by land, or traverse the wide expanse of ocean, are more likely to meet with strange things than those who never leave the place of their nativity; and though the following anecdote may be classed as above described, yet there are many persons now living, who were present, and can corroborate the truth of the circumstance:—

When the army, under the command of Brigadier General Oswald, took possession of the Septinsula, or

the Seven Islands, in the Ionian Sea, in 1810, Santa Maura* held out, and was regularly besieged, the navy co-operating with their guns and men. The citadel was situated on a narrow peninsula, extending from east to west nearly; the English batteries on the north side constructed close to the sea; when a cannon ball from the citadel, striking the water, dashed a fish, about the size of a large herring, on the beach, which being perceived by one of the seamen, he ran and picked it up, and observing a burning wad which had just been discharged from one of our eighteen pounders, he squatted down, and composedly broiled his fish, although entirely exposed to the enemy’s fire, then brought it into the battery, and divided it with his messmates, the shot flying and shells bursting about his head the whole time. H.

ABLINGTON STREET,
CAMDEN TOWN.

SINGULAR SAGACITY OF HORSES IN FINLAND.—In May, when the snows are melted, the horses leave their masters, and go to certain parts of the forest, where, it seems, they have a general rendezvous. There they form themselves into different companies, which never mix with others or separate, and each company chooses a particular pasturage, a department they never quit, or encroach on the territories of others. When they have consumed the grass here they decamp with the same order to another part. The polity of these societies is so well regulated, and their marches so uniform, that their masters know always where to find them in case of need. After their work is done, the horses return to their companions in the woods. In September, when the season sets in, they quit the forests in troops, and each goes back to his master’s stall. These horses are small,

* The Island of Santa Maura, the ancient Leucadia from whence Sappho is said to have leaped from the rock; the spot still bears the appellation of the Lover’s Leap.

but sure and brisk, and very vicious: though they are commonly gentle, yet some are not caught without difficulty. These are usually in good plight when they come from this forest expedition, but the continued labour to which they are put in winter, and the little nourishment given them, soon bring them down again. They roll themselves in the snow as our horses do in the grass, and, in the bitterest cold, stand night after night in the yard as well as in the stable.

GREEN PEAS.

THE gifts made by rich protectors of women *A LA MODE*, in Paris, do not always remain at the place of destination. They often circulate over that metropolis, and remain the property of persons who never heard the name of the original donor. The following anecdote proves the astonishing circulation to which rarities for the table are subject:—

Green peas, when scarce and out of season, produce in Paris, as well as London, a great price, and are esteemed delicacies of the first order. A young sprig of nobility, very gallant, lately made a present of three pints of peas to a nymph with whom he was passionately enamoured. They cost him six Louis. The lady considered it a sin to regale upon food so dear. She resolved to sell the peas and apply the money to the purchase of a new pelisse; she sent her maid to sell the peas in the market.—The girl fortunately applied to a fruiterer, who was most desirous of getting some for one of his chief customers, a *maitre d'hotel*. It so happened that another lover, having paid a visit to the object of his tenderness, the conversation turned upon things in and out of season, and judging from the manner in which she spoke of green peas, that she would be delighted to eat a few, he ran off to the market.—Chance conducted him to the very shop where the maid, belonging to the frugal belle, offered the present made her mistress for sale. He purchased them out of the hands of the fruiterer, at the moderate price of twenty-five Louis,

and returned home, to put them in a basket, and present it in style.

The maid went to her mistress, and related the manner in which she had disposed of the article.—When she heard the name of the second purchaser, she knew him as one of her admirers, and became jealous, under the idea that he had bought the peas as a present for another woman. This afflicting idea ran in her head, when a footman, from the man in question, brought a basket covered with flowers and ribbands as a present for the damoiselle.

Astonished to find the peas which she believed destined for another, intended a second time for herself, the idea occurred of sending them to the kitchen; but her mother, economical as well as speculative, reminded her that it would be more advantageous to let them go to an advocate who was employed to get her divorced from her husband.

The advocate, instead of regaling himself, presented the peas to a marquis to whom he was under the greatest obligations. The marquis had just received the present, when the chevalier, who bought the peas for twenty-five Louis, entered on a visit, and beheld the very corbeille which he had taken the pains to ornament with ribbands.

At this sight he had no doubt the marquis was preferred by his belle, and he ran to reproach her for perfidy.

They disputed without understanding each other. At that moment arrived the valet de chambre of the marquis, who did not dine at home that day, and being also one of the friends of the belle, had sent her the young peas as a scarce thing.

After this adventure they did not again change their destination.

The lady settled the affair with the chevalier, and eat the peas in his company, notwithstanding she had sold them, and given them away.

CURRENT WINE.

The samples of wine lately exhibited at Exeter, were of white and red, by

Mr. Samuel B. Stevens of Exeter; and of red, by Joseph Tilton, Esq. of Exeter. The wine from the white currant, for body and flavour, was preferred; and the committee awarded to Mr. Stevens the premium.—This wine had no distilled spirit mixed with it, and was made by the following receipt:—

“To each gallon of clear juice was added two gallons of water, and to each gallon of the mixture was added three and a half pounds of white Havana sugar, and put immediately into a clean wine barrel; after it had done fermenting, it was bunged tight.”

The red wine of Mr. Stevens was made by the following receipt:—

“To each gallon of clear juice was added two gallons of water, and to each gallon of the mixture was added three and a half pounds of good brown sugar, and put into good barrels; after it had done fermenting, it was stopped tight. In February after it was made, one gallon of the best fourth proof Coniac brandy was added to each barrel, and stirred up thoroughly.”—HAVERHILL GAZ.

ENGLISH PROVERBIAL SAYINGS.

BRAG IS A GOOD DOG, BUT HOLDFAST IS A BETTER.—This proverb is a severe reflection upon braggadochios who talk big, boast and rattle. It is also a memento for those who make abundance of promises to do well in future, but are suspected to want constancy and resolution to perform them.

WHAT IS BRED IN THE BONE WILL NEVER BE OUT OF THE FLESH.—This proverb is applied to such as inherit some vice from their parents; and intimates, that persons naturally addicted to any vice will scarce ever be reclaimed afterwards by the art of rhetoric, or the power of persuasion, authority, or command.

A BURNT CHILD DREADS THE FIRE.—This proverb intimates that it is natural for all living creatures, whether rational or irrational, to consult their own security and self-preservation; and whether they act

by instinct or reason, it still tends to some care of avoiding those things that have already done them an injury.

MUCH FALLS BETWEEN THE CUP AND THE LIP.—This is a cautionary proverb applicable to those sanguine persons who too confidently depend upon future expectations, unthoughtful of the preventional contingencies that may intervene.

I TALK OF CHALK, AND YOU OF CHEESE.—All the impertinence in conversation, commerce, or business, is reprehended by this saying, whereby a company does not preserve harmony in its discourse, or keep to the point in question.

ROCHFORD, ESSEX.

AT King's Hill, about half a mile north east of Rochford Church, is held what is called the **LAWLESS COURT**, a whimsical custom, the origin of which is not known. On the Wednesday morning next after Michaelmas day, the tenants are bound to attend upon the first crowing of the cock, and to kneel and do their homage without any thing of light but such as the heavens will afford. The steward of the court calls all such as are bound to appear with as low a voice as possible, giving no notice when he goes to execute his office; however, he that gives not an answer is deeply fined. They are all to whisper to each other, nor have they any pen and ink, but supply that deficiency with a coal; and he that owes suit and service, and appears not, forfeits to the lord of the manor double his rent every hour he is absent. A tenant of this manor forfeited not long ago, his land for non-attendance, but was restored to it, the lord only taking a fine.

W. H.

THE TRADITION OF THE DEVIL AND DOCTOR FAUSTUS was derived from the odd circumstance in which the Bibles of Faust, who was the printer, appeared to the world. When he had printed off a considerable number of copies, he undertook the sale of them at Paris. The copies were in imitation

of manuscript, and it was his interest to pass them off as such. But as he was enabled to sell his bibles at sixty crowns while the scribes demanded five hundred, universal astonishment was excited; and particularly when he produced copies as fast as they were wanted, and even lowered his price. The uniformity of the copies too increased the wonder. Informations were constantly given to the magistrates against him as a magician; his lodgings were searched, and a great number of copies being found they were seized. Faust's red ink, which was peculiarly brilliant, was said to be his blood; and it was solemnly adjudged that he was in league with the devil. At length, to save himself from a bonfire, Faust disclosed his art to the parliament of Paris, who immediately discharged him from all prosecution, in consideration of the usefulness of his invention.

LINES

On an Hindostan girl, as she was borne up the country in her polanquin, on being separated from the man she loved (an Englishman) who was about to marry.

'Tis thy will, and I must leave thee;
O thou, best loved, farewell!
I forbear, lest I should grieve thee,
Half my heartfelt pangs to tell.
Soon a British fair will charm thee,
Thou her smiles will fondly woo,
But tho' she to rapture warm thee
Don't forget thy poor Hindoo.

Well I know this happy beauty
Soon thy envied bride will shine;
But will she, by anxious duty,
Prove a passion warm as mine?
If to rule be her ambition,
And her own desires pursue,
Thou'lt recall my fond submission,

And regret thy poor Hindoo.
Born herself to rank and splendour,
Will she deign to wait on thee;
And those soft attentions render
Thou so oft hast praised in me?
Yet why doubt her care to please thee!
Thou must ev'ry heart subdue,
I am sure each maid that sees thee
Loves thee like thy poor Hindoo.

No, ah! no! tho' from thee parted
Other maids will peace obtain,

But thy Lela, broken hearted,
Ne'er oh! ne'er will smile again.
O how fast from thee they tear me!
Faster still shall death pursue;
But 'tis well—death will endear me,
And thou'lt mourn thy poor Hindoo.

The Wit's Nunchion.

When Sir Cloudesley Shovel was only a boy in the navy, under the patronage of Sir John Marlborough, on hearing the admiral express an earnest wish that some papers might be conveyed to the captain of a ship, then engaged in action at a considerable distance, he, with great resolution, undertook to swim with the dispatches in his mouth through the line of the enemy's fire, and this service he actually performed, to the astonishment of all those who were witnesses of his courage.

Mr. and Mrs. Liston dined one day with George Colman, when late in the evening Liston said to his wife (who is of exceeding low stature) "Come, Mrs. L. let us be going."—"Mrs. L. indeed!" said Mr. Colman, "Mrs. Liston you mean."

A REBUS.

A denial revers'd, when next fifty is plac'd,
And when with five hundred the former is grac'd;
With the name that you'll find in the contra to off,
Will shew you a city; I think, plain enough.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The observations of STAR we received with great pleasure, and shall be happy to gain his assistance, as also W. H. J. F. Ferguson, W. Strong, Jones, Wills, W. C., Momus, and Ty, have all been attended to; but we are obliged to reject much of their labour, because many of their articles are either so very stale, or too much gathered from our contemporaries, therefore, unless they can send us greater rarities, they will not find a place in the Nic-Nac.

Printed and Published by F. WALLIS, Camden Town; and sold by all Booksellers and Newsmen, in Town and Country.—Price One Penny.

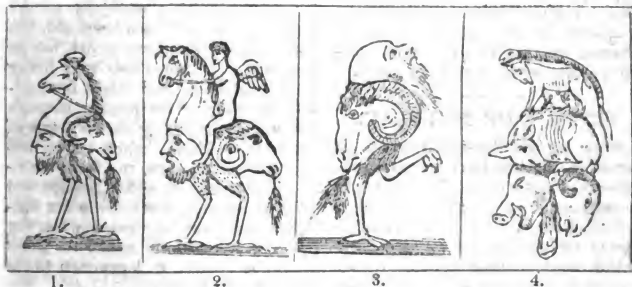
THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. XIII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1823. PRICE 1d.

"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—JANUS-FARE.



HIEROGLYPHICS FROM MICHAEL ANGELO'S WORKS.

THESE sculptures are taken from Mich. Angelo's "Le Gemme Antiche figurate," printed at Rome, 1700, 4to., and represent some antique figures, cut in precious stones, which, by the oddness of their hieroglyphic commixture, are supposed to involve some dicitious mysteries of the Priscillianists, those ancient heretics, or, as others imagine, the heathen mythology, in which latter sense they are explained by the author as follows:—

FIG. I.—The ram's head, with an ear of corn in its mouth, signifies corn, which runs into ears, under the sign of Aries, or the ram; the grotesque human head is to be understood of the god Pan, whom the heathens believed to be the same with the sun, the common parent of all things: by the feet of a cock, a very hot bird, and therefore appropriated to the sun, is signified the influence of the sun: the horse's head and breast our author understands of water, according to Homer and Thales, the first principle of this universe; and the corn is put for any kind of fruit proper for human aliment.

FIG. II.—The winged young man managing the horse, represents the Demon, or Genius, which Jamblichus

and others believe to preside over the generation and actions of men.

FIG. III.—Supposing the explications given above, the elevation of the cock's foot plainly signifies the heat of the sun raising the foot or stalk of the corn, when he is in the sign of the ram.

FIG. IV.—This is a very chimerical structure, which was engraved on a cornelian; the author imagines it to involve a symbolical adumbration of the city of Rome and its founders. For by the serpent at the top is denoted the coming of Æneas into Italy, after he had seen a great snake near his father's tomb, in Sicily; the sow which has had litters, indicates the sacrifice offered by Æneas after his arrival at the place where Ascanius afterwards founded the city of Alba; or, since it was customary with the ancients, at entering into leagues or treaties, to sacrifice a sow, perhaps the animal was designed as a symbol of that solemn confederation between Romulus and Tatius, king of the Sabines. The she-wolf suckling two children, literally represents the education of Romulus and Remus, according to vulgar tradition; Hercules' club, and the boar's head at the

bottom, are symbols of that valour and resolution for which the ancient Romans were so remarkably eminent, both in conquering their enemies and subduing their own vices and passions. The same, probably, was intended by the head of the ram, a very pugnacious animal, and therefore consecrated to Mars; but our author interprets it as a symbol of Venus, the mother of Æneas, because the Elæenses worshipped her image sitting on a ram.

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

AFTER the Hartley-nick contest, Sir Geoffrey, having been placed in the office of Justice of the Peace, so soon as the king's restoration was put upon a settled basis, soon had Dr. Dummer replaced in the parish, from which he had been forcibly ejected during the usurpation. Bridgenorth, thus chagrined, entices Deborah Debbitch from Lady Peveril's service, and with her, for the care of his daughter Alice, leaves the country; and, as there was but little matter worthy of mark occurred at Martindale after this, we must pass over the transactions of several years.

About five years after Master Bridgenorth had left the country, a singular incident took place. Sir Geoffrey was absent at the Chesterfield races, and Lady Peveril, who was in the habit of walking around every part of the neighbourhood unattended, or only accompanied by Ellesmere, or her little boy, had gone down one evening upon a charitable errand to a solitary hut, whose inhabitant lay sick of a fever, which was supposed to be infectious. Lady Peveril never allowed apprehensions of this kind to stop "devoted charitable deeds;" but she did not choose to expose either her son or her attendant to the risk which she herself, in some confidence that she knew precautions for escaping the danger, did not hesitate to incur.

Lady Peveril had set out at a late hour in the evening, and the way proved longer than she expected; several circumstances also occurred to detain her at the hut of her patient.

It was a broad autumn moon-light, when she prepared to return homeward through the broken glades and upland which divided her from the castle. This she considered as a matter of very little importance, in so quiet and sequestered a country, where the road lay chiefly through her own domains, especially as she had a lad about fifteen years old, the son of her patient, to escort her on her way. The distance was better than two miles, but might be considerably abridged by passing through an avenue belonging to the estate of Moultrassie-Hall, which she had avoided as she came, not from the ridiculous rumours which pronounced it to be haunted, but because her husband was much displeased when any attempt was made to render the walks of the castle and hall common to the inhabitants of both.

However, although the Dobby's Walk was within the inhibited domains of the hall, the Lady Peveril determined to avail herself of it, for the purpose of shortening her road home, and she directed her steps accordingly. But when the peasant-boy, her companion, who had hitherto followed her, whistling cheerily, with a hedge-bill in his hand, and his hat on one side, perceived that she turned to the stile which entered the Dobby's Walk, he shewed symptoms of great fear, and at length, coming to the lady's side, petitioned her, in a whimpering tone,—“Don't ye now—don't ye now, my lady, don't ye go yonder.”

Lady Peveril, observing that his teeth chattered in his head, and that his whole person exhibited great signs of terror, began to recollect the report, that the first squire of Moultrassie, the brewer of Chesterfield aforesaid, who had bought the estate, and then died of melancholy, for lack of something to do (and, as was said, not without suspicions of suicide); was supposed to walk in this sequestered avenue, accompanied by a large headless mastiff, which, when he was alive, and had his head, was a favorite of the ex-brewer.—(Continued on page 145.)

TO THE
EDITOR OF THE NIC-NAC.

PRAY, Mr. Editor, are you a peripatetic genius?—in your hours of relaxation from literary labour, do you say with Richard, "I'll forth and walk awhile," and, emerging from your classic dormitory—a walking cyclopedia—indulge in a healthful exercise, and inhale the PURE atmosphere of "London and its environs," gathering food for amusement or reflection, from the various objects of interest that present themselves to the eyes of the metropolitan tourist? Or, art thou a sedentary, wise, grave man, who, "enthroned in elbow chair," sees the world in the "History of all Nations," and forms observations on men and manners, dim and darkly seen through the lens of a parlour window? Let me rather conclude you are, like myself, of a perambulative disposition, accustomed to "beat the hoof in every weather," caring not for the disagreeables of wind or rain, though often experienced in the shape of muddy shoes—soiled spatterdashes—torn umbrella—or drenched garments. Lucky indeed have you been if these ordinary evils are the worst that have befallen you: for instance, think of your new hat being blown off your head in a gale of wind—the peculiar delight with which it bounds, "like a thing of life," from gutter to gutter, with the most aggravating perseverance, and sporting with every breeze, which I doubt not you would be apt to consider "blasts from hell," rather than "airs from Heaven;" if you have not experienced this pleasure, it is not unlikely that, among the many moving accidents to which the town traveller is liable, it may have been your lot to be returning to your home, on a wet Sunday evening, and passing close to a chapel or church, at the time of the outpouring of the congregation; what a delightful rencontre! to be hemmed in on all sides, and eventually born away by the overwhelming crowd. In vain do you oppose or attempt to break through the ranks: armed with umbrellas, they bid defiance to your efforts; and,

amidst the conflicting tumult occasioned by each one striving to get before his neighbour, if you escape without losing an eye, or serious damage to your upper-works, it is extremely fortunate. But, ten to one, the annoyance does not end here, for scarcely have you got footing on the pavement, before you are again forced into the kennel, to make room for a procession of little charity-boys, who, with a tall, gaunt-looking personage at their head, come clattering on with their thick shoes and buckskin indescribables, and follow in succession through such a lengthened continuity of line, that you are led to think it is literally without end; and to add to the distress of your situation (ankle deep in the mire), perhaps a hackney coach breaks down at the moment of passing you, and its poor jaded horses, floundering in the mud, bespatters you from the crown of your head to the sole of your shoe, while the urchins chuckle and grin, and toss up their snub noses, in the highest relish of enjoyment, at your misfortune.

Consequences equally unpleasant to those I have mentioned, result from coming in contact with a guard of soldiers, on their way to or from the Bank, or any other of the public offices, who, with such undeviating rectitude, turn neither to the right nor left out of their regular line of march, regardless of the comforts of their fellow passengers, whether male or female, that it would seem they were constantly desirous of manifesting the proper distinction between the civil and military part of the executive government by behaving in the most uncivil manner to all those whom chance may throw in their way.

If, as I have surmised, Mr. Editor, your habits are congenial with my own, as far as regards the mode of spending your leisure hours, I will occasionally do myself the pleasure of transmitting a portion of my travelling memoranda, in the hope that, while it may mutually assist our rambling recollections, it will also afford some amusement to your readers. *

NIXON'S PROPHECIES.

SIR,—Some of the newspapers have recently been amusing their readers with extracts from the prophecies of that redoubtable manufacturer of almanacks, Francis Moore, physician; but how much more profitably would they have been occupied in consulting those of the Cheshire prophet, Nixon. The latter personage has been dead nearly three centuries and a half, yet I'll undertake to bet a cool fifty that his predictions are better worth attending to than those of any almanack maker, or other old woman, now going; and, to back my assertions, I herewith forward you some extracts from them, evidently relating to the year 1823. 'Twould puzzle any of the counterfeit "clever men" who traverse the country, casting nativities, and duping poor serving-girls out of their shillings, to predict events with half so much precision, even a week before hand. What, for instance, do you think of the following correct description of the present agricultural distresses, from the mouth of a man who died in the reign of Henry VII?

"The corn will be sold for what it will fetch,
And farms will be had for lifting the latch:
Landlords shall stand, with hat in their hand,
To beg of their tenants to hold their land."

And how clearly are the heart-burnings between the fundholders and landholders, with the noisy meetings at Hereford, Wells, Norwich, &c. pointed at in the subjoined four lines:

"'Twixt our own money and our own men
Shall a dreadful war begin;
Between the SICKLE and the SUCK
All England shall have a pluck."

By the WAR here mentioned, I trust nothing more is foretold than the war of words between the contending parties. The SICKLE evidently means the farmers, and the SUCK the fundholders, whom Cobbett and his party are accustomed to style horse-leeches.

Politicians who apprehend great danger from the colossal power of Russia, and the despotic notions of the Calmuc dandy, its emperor, will

be sadly alarmed by the following prediction, which I imagine shadows forth an invasion of England from the snowy regions of the north. "Horses made of trees" are evidently ships:—

"Foreign nations shall invade England with snow on their helmets. An army shall come out of the north riding on trees made of ships."

The timorous, however, may discard their fears, for the couplet which follows shews that the result of the impending attack will be fortunate for Britain:—

"The Cock of the North shall be made to flee,
And his feathers be pluck'd for his pride."

There have lately been several accounts published of a method of walking on water, discovered by a gentleman of Liverpool. 'Tis fervently to be hoped that he will not impart to horses the secret of this invention, because Nixon assures us that such a novel state of affairs would be very fatal to the nation.

"When men and horses walk on the water, then trouble is preparing for kings. Men shall be at strife with one another, because of their numbers, and there shall be famine in the midst of plenty."

Probably, however, this prophecy has no relation to the present times, or to the exploits of the marine ambulator of Liverpool, but to events which have long since occurred. In a scarce old tract called "England's Worthies in the Civill and Bloudy Warres," 1647, I find a transaction described which seems to have fulfilled his prediction exactly:—

"In January, 1643, in the very midst of the bitterest and deepest frost and snow that men could march through, the most noble and renowned General Lesly marched with his army out of Scotland into England, and with great hazard and difficulty passed his ordnance and artillery over the river Tyne, which was then (by God's providence) extremely frozen over, even so as to bear the weight of them."

The overthrow of the French eagles at Waterloo, and the destiny of

Buonaparte, are described as plainly in the four lines that follow as if Nixon had read the Annual Register for 1815 ere he delivered them:—

"Beside a forest, on a plain,
Shall the Eagle's brood be slain;
The weary Eagle he shall flee
To an island in the sea"

What can be clearer? The forest is the forest of Soignies, the plain is the plain of Waterloo, the eagle is Buonaparte, and the island is St. Helena, where he found a prison and a grave.

I next meet with a piece of intelligence very alarming to poor spinsters, whose numbers, it appears by the late Population Returns, already exceed those of the males in a most inconvenient proportion, and, if Nixon speaks truth, are destined to preponderate still more largely. He says,

"Battles will rage to such degree,
And slaughter leave such heaps of slain,
That girls will cry, with fear and glee,
'Oh! mother, mother, I've seen a man!'"

The last prediction I shall cite, Mr. Editor, touches the cockneys very nearly, and "comes home to the business and bosoms of them all." In one part of Nixon's effusions I read that

"Lincoln was, London is, and York
shall be,
The greatest city of the three."

Mother Shipton, too, foreboded that when London reached Hampstead the former would fall, a prophecy which seems on the point of being accomplished; for during an evening ramble last autumn, I observed that there was scarcely a space of 500 yards on the road between the two places unoccupied by houses.

BOTTOM OF A WELL,
19th. February, 1823.

TRUTH.

Interesting Varieties.

REPTILE CONTEST.

THE following description of a contest between the black snake and another species, is extracted from the letters of an American farmer:—

"One of my constant walks, when

I am at leisure," says the gentleman, "is in the low lands, where I have the pleasure of seeing my cattle; horses, and colts. Exuberant grass replenishes all. In the middle of that tract, I have cut a ditch eight feet wide; on each side of this, I carefully sow every year some grains of hemp; the plants from which rise to the height of fifteen feet, so strong and full of limbs as to resemble young trees. These produce natural arbours, rendered often still more compact by the assistance of an annual creeping plant, which we call a vine, that never fails to entwine itself among the branches, and always produces a very desirable shade. As I was one day sitting, solitary and pensive, in this primitive arbour, my attention was engaged by a strange sort of rustling noise at some paces distant. I looked all around, without distinguishing any thing, until I climbed up one of the great hemp stalks, when, to my astonishment, I beheld two snakes of considerable length, the one pursuing the other with great celerity through a hemp stubble field. The aggressor was of the black kind, six feet long; the fugitive was a water-snake, nearly of equal dimensions. They soon met, and in the fury of their first encounter, appeared in an instant firmly twisted together; and, whilst their united tails beat the ground, they mutually tried, with open jaws, to lacerate each other. What a fell aspect did they present! Their heads were compressed to a very small size—their eyes flashed fire, and after this conflict had lasted five minutes, the second found means to disengage itself from the first, and hurried towards the ditch. Its antagonist instantly assumed a new posture, and half creeping, half erect, with a majestic mein, overtook and attacked the other again, which placed itself in a similar attitude, and prepared to resist. The scene was uncommon and beautiful: for thus opposed, they fought with their jaws, biting each other with the utmost rage; but, notwithstanding this appearance of mutual courage and fury, the water-snake still seemed

desirous of retreating towards the ditch, its natural element. This was no sooner perceived by the keen-eyed black one, than twisting its tail twice round a stalk of hemp, and seizing its adversary by the throat, not by means of its jaws, but by twisting its own neck twice round that of the water-snake, he pulled it back from the ditch. To prevent a defeat, the latter took hold likewise of a stalk on the bank, and, by the acquisition of that point of resistance, became a match for his fierce antagonist.—Strange was this to behold: two great snakes strongly adhering to the ground, mutually fastened together by means of the writhings which lashed them to each other; and stretched at their full length, they pulled, but pulled in vain; and, in the moments of greatest exertion, that part of their bodies which was entwined, seemed extremely small, while the rest appeared inflated, and now and then convulsed with strong undulations, rapidly following each other. Their eyes appeared on fire, and ready to start out of their heads. At one time the conflict seemed decided; the water-snake bent itself into great folds, and by that operation rendered the other more than commonly outstretched; the next minute the new struggles of the black one gained an unexpected superiority; it acquired two great folds likewise, which necessarily extended the body of its adversary, in proportion as it had contracted its own. These efforts were alternate; victory seemed doubtful, inclining sometimes to one side, sometimes to the other, until at last the stalk to which the black snake was fastened suddenly gave way, and, in consequence of this accident, they both plunged into the ditch. The water did not extinguish their vindictive rage, for, by their agitations, I could still trace, though I could not distinguish, their attacks. They soon reappeared on the surface, twisted together, as in their first onset; but the black snake seemed to retain its wonted superiority, for its head was exactly fixed above that of the other, which it incessantly pressed down under the

water, until it was stifled, and sunk. The victor no sooner perceived its enemy incapable of further resistance, than, abandoning it to the current, it returned to the shore and disappeared."

ALLEGORICAL ORIGIN OF MAN.

Versified from an Apologue by Dr Sheridan.

AFFLICTION one day, as she bark'd to the roar,
Of the stormy and struggling billow,
Drew a beautiful form on the sands of the shore
With the branch of a weeping willow.

Jupiter, struck with the noble plan,
As he roam'd on the verge of the ocean,
Breath'd on the figure, and calling it man,
Endued it with life and motion.

A creature so glorious in mind and in frame,
So stamp'd with each parent's impression,
Among them a point of contention became,
Each claiming the right of possession.

He is mine, said Affliction, I gave him his birth,
I alone am his cause of creation:—
The materials were furnished by me,
answered Earth,—
I gave him, said Jove, animation.

The gods, all assembled in solemn divine,
After hearing each claimant's petition,
Pronounced a definitive verdict on man,
And thus settled his fate's disposition.

Let Affliction possess her own child and the woes
Of life cease to harrass and goad it;
After death, give his body to Earth,
whence it rose,
And his spirit to Jove who bestow'd it.

SUN-SET AND SUN-RISE.

CONTEMPLATE, when the sun declines,
Thy death, with deep reflection!
And when again he rising shines,
Thy day of resurrection!

WATERLOO COLOURS, (Heroism.)

—In a Scottish regiment at the battle of Waterloo, the standard-bearer was killed, and clasped the colours so fast in death, that a sergeant in trying to

no purpose to rescue them, on the near approach of the enemy, made a violent effort, and throwing the dead corpse, colours and all, over his shoulders, carried them off together. The French seeing this, were charmed with the heroism of the action, and hailed it with loud clappings and repeated shouts of applause.

COMMENCEMENT AND PROGRESS OF THE NATIONAL DEBT.

The national debt commenced in the reign of William III.

	millions.
At his death	46
Queen Anne's do	48
George I. 1727	53
Seven years war, 1762	141
American war, 1783	258
Beginning of French war, 1793	259
Middle of ditto, 1802	540
In the year 1820	836

NOBODY!

SIR—There is a mischievous fellow in our neighbourhood, that, as to non-entity, absolutely outvies the invisible girl. His name is Nobody. In domestic economy, he particularly distinguishes himself, by the demolition of every fragile article. Whatever is broken (whether it be a pot or a pan, a glass or decanter), no "Somebody" can be discovered, as the aggressor; from whence 'tis natural to infer, that "Nobody" must be the rogue. Really, Mr. Editor, this is a circumstance which demands no common degree of investigation, and I shall be truly obliged by some remarks on the subject from the patrons of the *Nic-Nac*. When the "crockery ware" bill is handed me (or rather the crackery ware), I could wish to saddle every individual of the house with their own burthens; but, alas! if a regular inquiry is made on the subject, the delinquents very calmly clap both the saddle and the burthen on the back of Mr. Nobody; thus I have the consolation of paying the piper, and abusing the invisible author of my misfortunes, for whom the following motto is not mal apropos:—

"Ex nihilo nihil."

To give a deeper stain to his iniqui-

ties, the miscreant has turned poet, as the following lines, addressed to a lady, will testify:—

"Now you who love riddles, and guess them so well,
Pray say who I am, for I know you can tell;
I was born before Adam (I should say the fall,
For Adam, you knew, ma'am, was not born at all)
I can tell if the fruit was an apple or pear,
For (excepting the devil) I only was there—
My father's my mother; nay, now I've begun,
I still will go farther—my daughter's my son.
Then, as to my person, I'm ten yards in height,
And as to my bulk, I am ten tons in weight.
I refused a good place of £3000 a year,
My conscience, forsooth, whispered that in my ear.
I'm as ugly as Satan, yet, give me my due,
I'm as handsome, fair nymph, and as modest as you."

ANSWER.

"The riddle explained, it is Nobody, madam;
For Nobody, surely, was born before Adam,
And Nobody knows (just excepting the devil)
The shape of the fruit, the occasion of evil;
That Nobody's father's his mother I know,
And Nobody's daughter's his son, you'd allow.
Then as to my height, sure you cannot deny
That Nobody ever was thirty feet high
And as to my bulk (it is true tho' I say't)
That Nobody ever was ten ton in weight;
And Nobody's so independent I fear,
To refuse a good place of £3000 a year.
The devil so ugly depicted we see,
That Nobody sure was as ugly as he;
And the last line we own to be certainly true,
For Nobody e'er was as handsome as you."

It may not be amiss to notice, that Nobody is equally culpable in regard to the loan of books. Somebody will solemnly declare that he lent them;

whilst Nobody will not acquiesce in the assertion. (Excuse, gentle reader, the two negatives, "Nobody and not;" inasmuch as "Nobody" is intended as a personification.) Seriously speaking, 'tis a pitiful, if not unpardonable custom to borrow books, without the most distant idea of returning them. It is the means of ruining the most valuable libraries, and of petrifying the fervent impulse of genius, whenever a reference to those learned absenteees is requisite.

A most famous philosopher has remarked, that in borrowing books he derived the greatest advantage; inasmuch, that he studied the contents with more than common attention. Had the volumes been his own, he might defer their perusal "till a more convenient season;" but when conscience whispered to him that a return was requisite, and that he might possibly never have another opportunity of benefitting by their wisdom, 'tis natural to suppose that no time was neglected, no assiduity considered too irksome, in order to feast on the delicious fruit, ere the tree of knowledge was blighted.

Alas! Mr. Editor, the leaves of my tree of knowledge, are either withered by the rude winds of neglect, or the still more desolating tempest of ingratitude. The only books remaining in the house, are those of the gospel, and the common law. The first, in the present civilized state of society, is universally distributed (I wish, I could add, attended to); but the latter is of no further use to the public, than to bewilder the brains of the unlearned, by an unnecessary superfluity of words, as stiff and unfashionable as the bodice and hoop of my great grandmother.

Christopherus Grose used to relate the following doubtful case:—A miller's ass, wanting to drink, stepped into a fisherman's boat, which was loosely floating on the water, and being thus put in motion, carried the beast down the stream. A lawsuit was instituted between the parties. The fisherman complained that the miller's ass had stolen his boat. The miller replied to the accusation, by

saying, that the fisherman's boat had run away with his ass. Here issue was joined. Martin Luther decided the point in dispute, by saying, that each party was to blame, being equally guilty of carelessness in the first instance.

Whether or not I may be compared to the boat or the ass, the public must determine; but, for my own part, I rather think the latter; since, in my endeavour to taste the waters of wisdom, I am carried down the stream of folly by trusting my existence (for such are books to me) to the uncertainty of friendship, which (like the element alluded to) must never be depended on.

CROYDON.

X.

The Wit's Nuntition.

An exciseman, looking at a boy angling, asked him what he was fishing for. "I'm fishing for the devil," says the boy, "but I'm unfortunately in want of the right bait to catch him with."—"What bait is that?" said the exciseman. "Why, sir," says the boy, "I have heard for that purpose, there is no better bait in the world than an exciseman."

To secure a seat in the Parisian theatres it is merely requisite to tie a pocket handkerchief round the bench. You may then leave it for hours, and, on your return, find it unoccupied. What would be the result of a similar experiment in London?

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The communications of W. H. Young, R. Smith, W. H., and the Visit to Stratford, want novelty. W. Chatterton's Anecdote from Phippen's Life of Kean is very apocryphal. Lines to Sleep shall appear. The answers to the Enigma in No. 3, are, Veil, Vile, Levi, Live, Evil. The solution of the Rebus, page 98 is LONDON. So many poetical replies have been sent, that we know not which to prefer, so decline them all. Many unpaid letters have been returned this week.

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THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o XIV.

SATURDAY, MARCH 1, 1823.

PRICE 1d.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.

ANCIENT PUNISHMENTS.

offended him, for which he was brought to trial at Edinburgh.

WE intend to continue this article as often as any thing upon the subject falls in our way, which seems adapted to amuse and interest our readers; not, however, seeking after details distinguished merely by their horrible enormities, but such as involve some interesting trait of character, or sublime display of heroism.

About the year 1580, when the whole English nation was greatly alarmed by the prospect of a marriage between Queen Elizabeth and the Duke of Anjou, whose nation and religion were alike odious to the people, John Stubbes, a member of Lincoln's Inn, and author of a celebrated work decrying the follies of that period, published a tract, called "The Discoverie of the Gaping Gulf whereinto England is like to be swallowed by a French Marriage, &c. &c." This book gave so much offence to the Queen, that Stubbes the author, William Page the publisher, and Hugh Singleton the printer, were apprehended, tried, and sentenced to have their right hands cut off by a butcher's knife and mallet. The heroic manner in which Stubbes and Page* underwent this barbarous punishment, as described in a scarce old work, was worthy of "antique Romans." It took place Nov. 3, 1579, when Stubbes, addressing himself to the by-standers, said,

"What a grieffe it is to the bodie to lose one of his members you all know. I am come hither to receive my punishment, according to the laws. I am sorie for the losse of my hand,

* Singleton, by the exertions of his friends, obtained a remission of his sentence.

P



Our cut this week represents a curious instrument of torture, found at Laird B——e's, in Scotland, in 1745, and brought to London by his royal highness the Duke of Cumberland; supposed to be made use of by the rebels to extort confession; but whether or not is uncertain.

This instrument is made of iron, weighing about 16lbs; the height about four feet; it opens like a pair of tongs, and encloses the neck in a broad collar, in which is fixed an iron spike that points to the back of the skull, which has a spring, so that if the unhappy person raises or drops his head, it must run into it; his hands and legs are fixed in cuffs, and the irons, which are four flat bars, by screws and bolts, which go through them in several places, confine him so close as to occasion excessive torment.

Laird B. it is said, put this instrument in practice, and tortured several of his tenants and others who had

and more sorie to lose it by judgment; but most of all with her Majesties indignation and evell opinion, whome I have soe highlie displeased. Before I was condempned, I might speak for my innocencie; but nowe my mouthe is stopped by judgment, to the which I submitt myselffe, ame content patientlie to endure whatsoever it pleaseth God, of his secrett providence, to laie upon me, and take it justlie deserved for my sinnes; and I pray God it maie be an example to you all, that it beinge so daungerous to offend the lawes, without an evell meaninge, as breedeth the losse of a haund, youe maie use your haunds holylye and praie to God for the long preservation of her Majestie over youe, whom God hath used as an instrument for a longe peace and many blessings over us; and specialee for his Gospell, whearby shee hath made a waie for us to rest and quietnes of our consciencies. For the French I force not; but my greatest grieffe is, in soe many weekes and daies imprisonment, her Majestie hath not once thought me worthie of her mercie, which she hath oftentimes extended to divers persons in greater offences. For my haund I esteeme it not soe muche, for I thinke I colde have saved it, and might do yet; but I will not have a guiltlesse harte and an infamous haunde. I praie youe all to praie with me, that God will strengthen me to endure and abide the paine that I ame to suffre, and graunt me this grace, that the losse of my haunde do not withdraw any parte of my dutie and affection to her Majestie, and because, when soe many veines of bloude are opened, it is uncertain howe they maie be stayed, and what will be the event theirow. Then kneeling, he said, "I beseeche you all to praye for me, that it wolde please God to forgive me my sinnes; and I crave pardon of all the worlde, and frellie forgive everie one that hath offended me; and soe with mercie to deale with me, that whether I live or die I may live or die his servaunt."

"My Maisters, if their be any among youe that doe love me, if your love be not in God and her Majestie, I utterlie denie your love." The hand

ready on the block to be stricken off, he said often to the people, "Praye for me, nowe mye calamitie is at hande." With these words it was struck off, when waving his hat with his remaining hand, he exclaimed, "God save the Queen!" and immediately swooned.

Page ascended the scaffold, and addressing himself to the by-standers, said,

"I ame come hither to receive the lawe according to my judgment, and thanke God of all; and of this I take God to witness, that knoweth the hartes of all men, that, as I ame sorie I have offended her Majestie, so did I never mene harme to her Highness' person, crowne, or dignitie; but have bene as trewe a subject as any was in Englande to my abilitie, except none:" (and holding up his right hand, he said), "This hand did I put to the plough, and got my living by it many years. If it wolde have pleased her Highness to have pardoned it, and have taken my lefte haund, or my life, she had delte more favourable with me, for nowe I have no meanes to live; but God, which is the father of us all, must provide for me. I beseeche you all to praie for me that I maie take this punishment patientlie." And so laying his hand on the block, he prayed the executioner to perform his office as quickly as possible, who, at two blows, severed the hand from his arm, whereat, lifting up the stump, he said to the people, "I have left there a true Englishman's hand;" and so went from the scaffold very stoutly, and with great courage.

ANECDOTES OF DRESS.

"THE ruff, in the time of Elizabeth, was common to both sexes; but under the fostering care of the ladies, attained, in stiffness, fineness, and dimensions, the most extravagant pitch of absurdity. It reached behind to the very top of the head, and the tenuity of the lawn or cambric of which it was made was such, that Stowe prophesied, they would 'wear ruffles of a spider's web.' In order to support so slender a fabric, a

great quantity of starch became necessary, the skilful use of which was introduced of various colours, one of which, the yellow dye, being the invention of a Mrs Turner, who was afterwards concerned in the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, was dismissed with abhorrence from the fashionable world, in consequence of this abandoned woman being executed at Tyburn in a ruff of her favorite tint. The extreme indignation with which Stubbes speaks of the use of starch is highly amusing:—"One arch or pillar," says he, "where-with the devil's kingdome of great ruffles is under-propped, is a certain kind of liquid matter which they call starch, wherein the devill hath learned them to wash and die their ruffles, which being drie, will stand stiff and inflexible about their neckes. And this starch they make of divers substances—of all colours and hues, as white, redde, blew, purple, and the like."

"We are further informed by the same vehement satirist, that the ruff had the additional support of an under-propper, called a *supertasse*, and that its plaits were adjusted by poking-sticks made of iron, steel, or silver, that, when used, were heated in the fire, a custom against which he expresses his wrath by relating a most curious story of a gentlewoman of Antwerp, who had her ruff poked by the devil on the 27th of May, the sound whereof, says he, 'is so blowne through all the world, and is yet fresh in every man's memory.' It appears that this unfortunate lady, being invited to a wedding, could not, although she employed two celebrated laundresses, get her ruff plaited according to her taste, 'upon which,' proceeds Stubbes, 'she fell to sweare and teare, to curse and ban, casting the ruffles under feete, and wishing that the devill might take her when shee did wear any neckerchers againe; a wish which was speedily accomplished; for the devill, assuming the form of a beautiful young man, made his appearance under the character of a suitor, and enquiring the cause of her agitation, tooke in hande the setting

of her ruffles, which he performed to her great contention and liking; in-somuch, as she, looking at herself in a glasse (as the devill had her) became greatly enamoured of him. This done, the young man kissed her, in the doing whereof, he writhed her neck in sunder, so that she died miserably; her body being straight waies changed into blew and black colours, most uggesome to beholde, and her face (which before was so amorous) became most deformed and fearfull to looke upon. This being known in the citie, great preparation was made for her buriall, and a rich coffin was provided, and her fearfull body was laide therein, and covered very sumptuously. Foure men immediately assayed to lift up the corpes, but could not move it; then sixe attempted the like, but could not once stirre it from the place where it stood. Whereat the standers-by marvelling, caused the coffin to be opened to see the cause thereof; where they found the body to be taken away, and a blacke catte, very lean and deformed, sitting in the coffin, setting of great ruffles, and frizling of haire, to the greates feare and woonder of all beholders."*

PLAYERS.

THE following quaint description of the manners and customs of the players at the commencement of the 17th century, is extracted from a scarce old work, called "*London and the Country carbonadoed and quartered. By D. Lupton. London 1602.*"—It will be seen that the lapse of two centuries has worked but little alteration in the character of these people;—substitute Methodists for Puritans in the subjoined passage, and the description is perfectly applicable to His Majesty's Servants now performing at the Theatres Royal, Drury Lane and Covent Garden:—

"Time, place, subject, actors, and clothes, either make or marr a play; the prologue and epilogue are like to an host and hostesse, one bidding their guests welcome, the other bid-

* *Anatomic of Abuses*, 4to. p. 43.

ding them farewell: the actors are like serving men, that bring in the scenes and acts as their meate, which are liked or disliked, according to every man's judgment; the neatest drest, and fairest deliured, doth please most. They are as crafty with an olde play, as bawds with olde faces; the one puts on a new fresh colour, the other a new face and name; they practice a strange order, for most commonly the wisest man is the fool; they are much beholden to schollers that are of meanes, for they sell them ware the cheapest: they have no great reason to love Puritans, for they hold their calling unlawful. New playes and new clothes many times help bad actions; they pray the company that's in, to hear them patiently, yet they would not suffer them to come in without payment; they say, as schollers now vse to say, there are so many, that one fox could find in his heart to eat his fellow. A player often changes: now he acts a monarch, to-morrow a beggar: now a souldier, next a taylor: his speech is loud, but neuer extempore; he seldom speaks his own minde, or in his own name: when men are heere, and when at church, they are of contrary mindes; there they think the time too long, but here too short. Most commonly when the play is done, you shall have a jigge or dance of all trades; they mean to put their legs to it, as well as their tongues: they make men wonder when they have done, for they all clappe their hands. Sometimes they flye into the countrey; but 'tis a suspicion that they are either poore or want clothes, or else company, or a new play; or do as some wandring sermonists, make one sermon trauaile, and serue twenty churches. All their care is to be like apes, to immitate and expresse other men's actions in their own persons: they love not the company of geese or serpents, because of their hissing; **THEY ARE MANY TIMES LOWZY**; its strange, and yet shift so often. As an alehouse in the country is beholden to a wilde school-master, so is an whoorehouse to some of these, for there they spend all they get. Well, I like them well, if when

they act vice they will leave it, and when vertue, they will follow it. I speak no more of them, but, when I please, I will go and see them."

I have said that this description is perfectly applicable to the players of the present day; I beg however to except the passage in small capitals. Not that I can speak upon this point from personal observation; but to the best of my knowledge and belief, they have greatly improved in point of cleanliness since 1602. K.

THE MEMORIAL OF SUPPER v. DINNER.

TO THE NOBILITY AND GENTRY
OF GREAT BRITAIN.

SHEWETH,—That your Memorialist is descended from the same common ancestors (viz. Nature and Exercise) as Dinner and Breakfast, which, in the Christian era may be traced as high as Adam: in the Chinese history several thousand years before that period.

That in the beginning, and for many ages afterward, your Memorialist was appointed joint guardian, with Dinner and Breakfast, of the constitution; the divisions of each other's reign being pointed out; and adhered to with the strictest punctuality.

That this friendly intercourse continued, as your Memorialist might say, from hand to mouth, to the middle of last century; with no other variations than what the nature of times and circumstances might admit of for the general good of the constitution. But about this period Dinner began to usurp a kind of elder right (unknown to the original contract), by making several encroachments on your Memorialist's power—such as not suffering her as usual to govern by day-light; suborning the affections of her votaries, so as to leave them little or no appetite to serve her; and withal, so enervating their bodies, that, compared to the votaries of Dinner, they began to appear not like the subjects of the same general empire.

That your Memorialist, through

the medium of her counsel, learned in the laws of nature—such as philosophers, physicians, &c., presented several remonstrances on this subject; yet, Dinner, so far from taking notice of any of these, seems to exult in her tyranny, by widening her power in the most arbitrary and unconstitutional manner.

That in order further to insult and contract the power of your Memorialist, Dinner has of late years joined in a kind of confederacy with two bastard brothers of our family, called Luncheon and Dessert; and thus, by the joint operation of those two devouring incendiaries, the powers of the original constitution are often suspended.

That in consequence of this repeated ill-usage, your Memorialist has been banished in her old days out of many respectable families, where she once presided, surrounded by wit, temperance, and conviviality; and that she now has little better company at her table than rakes, gluttons, gamesters, men midwives, demireps, &c. who, from the late hours of their profession, or the viciousness of their inclinations, are still induced to attend.

That, although it may be supposed your Memorialist's elder sister, Breakfast, has suffered equal injuries—this your Memorialist presumes to deny; for though her power may in some degree be contracted, she still retains a number of hearty followers, well attached to the constitution, who regularly attend the ROLL-call every morning; such as farmers, sportsmen, draymen, wagoners, coalheavers, &c.

Taking these premises into your consideration, your Memorialist humbly urges to your Honours that if some speedy stop be not put to the giant strides and ravages of Dinner, your poor Memorialist, Supper, who is already driven to Midnight, will be entirely lost, and confounded in Breakfast, and thus one of the branches of the oldest family in the world will be totally lost and destroyed.

SUPPER.

CYDER CELLAR, Feb. 26.

THE CAT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NIC-NAC.

SIR,—If you think proper to insert the following anecdote, you may assure your readers of its veracity:—

On the voyage to India, of the Honorable East India Company's ship, Admiral Gardner, in the year 1803, in the evening after dark, the ship sailing about four knots an hour, one of the crew, as veritable a seaman as ever mounted the ratlines, was amusing himself by striking with grains* at some Bonitos and other fish that were playing under the mizen chains, and on seeing something like a fish near the ship's side, he struck, and drew it out of the water, when his ears were saluted by most hideous yellings. Jack dropt the line, and ran, with all the symptoms of terror, to his messmates, swearing he had struck the devil or some sea monster. The sailors, who partook of Jack's superstition, were as unwilling to examine the cause as himself; till the officer on deck ordered a lanthorn, and by threats and entreaties prevailed on them to haul the line in, when it was found that a poor cat, which had been playing on the forecastle, had unfortunately fallen overboard, and had its sufferings speedily terminated as above described.

H.

ARLINGTON STREET,
CAMDEN TOWN.

MONOSYLLABIC CRITICISM.

SIR,—I am an old man, and a sworn foe to all long words, which I much hate; so you may well guess that it gave me no small share of joy to read the short piece which I send you with this: it seems to me to be just what such a thing ought, as it has not one long word in it, from first to last; and I trust you will think fit to print it in your NIC-NAC, as a guide to those who are not so deep in the art of such things as your sure friend,

BOB SHORT.

* Grain, a sort of four-pronged fork, barbed at the points, having a large pole and line attached to it, one end of which is fastened to the ship.

ON THE NIGHT THOUGHTS OF
YOUNG.

DEAR HAY,—Your last long sheet gave me no small joy : your thoughts square with mine, but your long six feet words are by no means to my taste, for I hate a long word, when a short one will serve my turn.

You press me to tell you what I think of the "Night Thoughts" of Young. I have read them with care, since your sheet came to my hands, and will make haste to let you know how they strike me.

Here and there a line comes in my way so dark, that I am quite at fault. What can you make of such a line as this?

"If a God bleeds, he bleeds not for a worm." Night 4.

Or of this?

"O be a man, and thou shalt be a God." Night 9.

Or of this?

"Hell had been, though there had been no God." Night 9.

Or of this?

"The proud run up and down in quest of eyes." Night 7.

He calls Death

"A wrench from all we love, from all we are." Night 2.

This is a poor line, but to give the old bard fair play, with his blank verse, I shall now quote some lines which may be read, I think, more than once, yet not tire the ear nor the mind.

"The bell strikes one! We take no note of time

"But from its loss: to give it then a tongue

"Is wise in man" Night 1.

There is, I think, much good sense in these lines;—sense which comes home to our hearts:—and pray mark, there is not a long nor a hard word in them.

Of the same stamp are the lines which I now will quote to fill up my page:—

"When the cock crew, he wept; smote by that eye

"Which looks on me, on all."

Night 2.

"We push time from us, yet we wish him back."

Night 2.

"What cause have we to build on length of life?" Night 5.

"Less base the fear of death, than fear of life." Night 5.

"Learn well to know how much may not be known" Night 5.

"Parts push us on to pride, and pride to shame." Night 7.

And so I take my leave of Young. I like him on the whole; though you may see by what I have said, that I do not doat on all he writes.

I am glad to hear you have had your health so well since you left us; we have all been ill in a slight way in New Bond Street, but we now mend fast.

I am, dear Hay, and shall be while I live,

Your true friend,

JOHN DRAX.

Interesting Varieties.

GINGER ALE. Excellent ginger ale may be thus made instantly at all seasons of the year. One dram of tartaric acid, two drams of ginger, three ounces of the best white sugar, pounded very fine, mixed together, and kept in blue paper, ready for use. One dram of carbonate of soda in white paper. Put the blue paper mixture into a half pint glass, three parts water, and the white paper powder into a wine glass full of water, mix them both well, and pour the latter into the half pint glass.

ST. CLEERE, CORNWALL.

NEAR the village of St. Cleere is a pile of rocks, placed one over another, and called Wringcheese, from the resemblance of some of them to large cheeses, pressed by the superincumbent weight. This pile, which attracts the admiration of travellers, is thirty-two feet high. The stones towards the top, by being many times larger than those in the middle, or nearer the foundation, project so far over the middle part, that it has been a matter of wonder how such an ill-constructed pile could subsist for so many ages, the stone being in so exposed a situation. The top stone is

said to have formerly a LOGAN or rocking stone, which, when it was entire, might be easily moved with a pole; but now great part of that weight, which kept one end of it in equipoise with the other, is taken away, whence it became immoveable. On the top are two irregular basins, but part of them is broken off. This structure is judged to have been one of the rock deities of the Druids.

TO SLEEP.

SLEEP! sweet, gentle, soothing sleep,
Come and still my troubled mind;
My brain is seared! I cannot weep!
Relief from thee alone I find.
I pray thee come, and hither bring
A cypress wreath to shade my brow,
And fan me with thy sable wing,
For, oh! my brain is burning now.
And when upon thy friendly arm
I rest my weary aching head,
Break not thy sweetly soothing charm,
But lay me softly with the dead.

ABBASTANZA.

The Wit's Nunchion.

IMPROMPTU on hearing Miss Stephens sing, "Angels ever bright and fair."—

Whilst you invoke the angels' care,
In notes so soft, so sweet, so rare,
I tremble lest you should be heard,
And they should take you at your word.

DR! ARBUTHNOT, when a young man, attempted to settle as a physician at Dorchester, a town in the west of England, remarkable for its salubrious air and healthy situation; circumstances highly desirable to an inhabitant, but unpropitious to the profitable practice of physic. On quitting Dorsetshire, a friend met him riding post to London. "Where are you going, Arbuthnot?" was a natural question. "To leave your confounded place, for a man can neither live nor die there," was his happy answer.

God and the soldier men alike adore
Just on the brink of danger: not before.
The danger o'er, they're equally requited,
God is forgotten, and the soldier slighted.

THE celebrated Dr. Ratcliffe never discharged a debt without the most urgent and repeated solicitations.—One day as the doctor was getting into his carriage, a poor paviour, whom he had employed to repair the foot-path before his house, seized the opportunity of presenting his bill, and stated the urgency of his necessities. "Why, you rascal!" cried the doctor, "you do not deserve to be paid: you have made bad work, and then covered it with earth."—"Ah! doctor," replied the suppliant, "mine is not the only bad work the earth covers."—His wit had the desired effect.

POPE LEO X. issued the following singular edict for the security of literary property:—"It is hereby decreed and ordered, that no bookseller, printer, merchant, or publisher, whatsoever, or whomsoever, shall, within ten years, print or expose to sale a work entitled 'Comments and Castigations upon P. Virgilius Maro, edited by Jacobus Valerianus,' at any other time or place, or in any other form or manner, than by his consent or permission. Whoever shall oppose or act contrary to this decree, SHALL BE DAMNED, and in addition to the pains of hell, shall be fined the sum of 100 golden ducats.—Given at St. Peter's, at Rome, this 26th day of March, and in the 5th year of our Pontificate, 1521.

MR. HOWARD, the philanthropist, in an interview with the late Emperor of Austria, was expatiating, with an honest warmth, on the comfortless and pernicious state of the Austrian and Hungarian prisons, and the shocking situation of the prisoners. The emperor, who valued himself on a code of penal laws, more efficacious, but less sanguine, than the English, was nettled, and replied, "I don't use them worse than you do in England, where you hang them up by dozens at a time."—"Very true," replied Howard, "but permit me to assure your majesty, that I had rather be hanged in England, than live in your German dungeons."

CHARLES XII. of Sweden, gave early proofs of that martial disposition, which, in his riper years, gained him so much glory, and in the sequel caused his disgraces and his death. Voltaire informs us that at seven years old he could manage a horse, and delighted in such violent exercises as formed in him betimes a vigorous constitution, capable of supporting the fatigues his temper led him to. One day he diverted himself in the king's apartment, with looking at two maps, one of a city of Hungary taken from the emperor by the Turks, and the other of Riga, the capital of Livonia, conquered by the Swedes, about a century before. Under the map of the Hungarian city were these words, taken from the book of Job, "The Lord gave it, the Lord hath taken it away, blessed be the name of the Lord!" The young prince having read them, took up a pencil immediately, and wrote under the map of Riga, "The Lord gave it to me, and the devil shall not take it from me!"

COLONEL BIRCH, one of Cromwell's most zealous and able officers, was of mean extraction, and originally a carrier, and in the exercise of that calling met with a misfortune which proved the stepping-stone to his future elevation. While carrying goods from Manchester to Hereford, he fell in with a party of the Protector's troops, who, in spite of his entreaties and remonstrances, seized upon his horses for the uses of the army. Rendered desperate by his loss, and determined to enforce redress or perish in the attempt, he sought an audience with the general, and after repeated solicitations, was admitted into Cromwell's presence. "I come," cried he, setting his back against the door of the apartment, and at the same time pulling a pistol from his breast, "I come to demand the restitution of my cattle, of which I have been robbed by your rascally troopers: without them I am deprived of the means of obtaining a livelihood, and care not what becomes of me. Either cause them to be restored this instant, or receive my

bullet through your brain." Struck with the boldness of the action, and appreciating the courage that could perform it, Cromwell not only presented Birch with an equivalent to his loss, but made him a captain on the spot; a stroke of policy justified by the result, for Birch not only became one of his warmest partizans, but materially contributed to establish the power of his patron, by his zeal, ability, and perseverance.

A CERTAIN excellent tragedian, distinguished by the dignity of his delivery, and the peculiar loftiness of his deportment, not only in the fulfilment of his professional duties, but in the common concerns of life, is said, on being importuned for alms, to have presented a sixpence to the pauper, observing at the same time, with the air of a Coriolanns, "Friend, we give but seldom, but when we do give, we give like a prince."

THE same performer, while contemplating the destruction of Covent Garden Theatre by fire, on being asked by a by-stander whether he had lost any thing, is reported to have replied, "My all, good friend—my all!"

THE natives of Hindostan are the laziest people under the sun, as the following adage, common among them, will sufficiently demonstrate:—It is better to walk than to run—it is better to sit still than to walk—it is better to lie down than to sit—it is better to sleep than to be awake—and death is best of all.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

— "Love's Victim," by J. W. F. shall shortly appear. B. P.'s "Ship-wrecked Mariner" does not exactly suit us. Many interesting prose articles, which we have not room to enumerate, have been received, and shall be inserted as quickly as possible, with various illustrative engravings. Our correspondents, who omit to pay the postage, do but waste their time and paper: their letters are invariably refused.

ERRATA.—Page 99, column 2. line 24, read bespatter. Page 102, column 2. line 32, for divine read div an.

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THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o 15.

SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 1823.

PRICE 1d.

"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.

WALKING ON WATER.



SIR,—The mention made in your 13th number of a method of walking on water, invented by a person at Liverpool, has recalled to my memory an account of a machine for a similar purpose, given in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for 1747, and illustrated by a cut. This article I subjoin for insertion in the "Nic-Nac," if you think it adapted to the nature of your work, and also a copy of the print, which you may perhaps think proper to have engraved. Whether the Liverpool performer has made a new discovery, or merely revived an old method, I cannot pretend to say, having never seen any description of his feats.

CLODIUS.

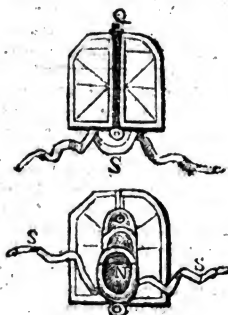
AN ACCOUNT OF THE HYDRASPIS, OR WATER-SHIELD.

A Machine, by the help of which, a person may walk on the water without fear of sinking.—From a Latin 4to in twelve sheets.

The inventor of this machine, John Christopher Wagenseil, a German of rank and erudition, was indebted for

the first hint of his contrivance, to observations on the swimming of geese and ducks, whence he began to consider whether it might not be possible for men to imitate them. He soon recollected a plan mentioned in Schwenter's *Deliciæ Physico-Mathematicæ*, which teaches how a man, by filling a pair of trowsers, budget, wrapper, or the like, with wind, may be enabled to walk upon the waters without danger of submersion. But, on making the experiment carefully, he found the apparatus so complicated as to render it very cumbersome, and not entirely secure, especially as leaden buskins were to be used, almost as heavy as the wearer, and highly uneasy to him. He therefore conceived that a machine might be contrived of wood, fitter for keeping a person above water, and furnishing him with the same requisites for swimming as are observed in water-fowl.—After several trials, he brought to perfection

a machine which he valued the more on account of its simplicity. This machine, which comes round the waist, does the office of the chest in water-fowl, and is of so simple a structure you may employ for it any carpenter or smith. It has the further convenience of two apertures, to receive a quantity of food sufficient for a long time, or to preserve money, writings, or other valuables in case of an inundation. This machine is keyed together on both sides by an iron pin; and has a pair of handles on the top, with an intent that it may serve, if need be, instead of a buckler or other defensive weapon, and that the party, when out of water, may in some measure ease himself of the weight (which, while it floats on the water is not perceptible) and prevent its pressing too hard upon the loins. The following cuts represent the upper and lower surface of the paddles for the feet, which expand or contract, on occasion, in a manner answerable to the feet of geese.



This part of the apparatus is easily prepared by an ordinary shoemaker, and consists of moveable flaps N O, of very thick triple leather, which open and shut, and are fastened to a wooden sole, on which the foot rests, by an iron pin Q, passing through their hinges. However, these flaps or paddles, as well as almost all the rest of the apparatus, may be made of wood. The last things observable are the straps or thongs S, which fas-

ten these water-saddles to the feet. The inventor, however, is of opinion that a person may be without these web-footed conveniences, and yet, by the bare help of the Hydraspis, be enabled to save himself amidst a rough sea, or the rage of a torrent that has burst its banks and overflowed the country; since these kinds of shoes are not very necessary, except one has a mind to pass a calm sea, some large standing water, or outstrip the current of a river; for, as to turning the body to this or that side, or round about, it is easily performed by mere agitation, without any assistance. But, that the thing might not rest on bare speculation, the author tells us that the emperor, to whom he presented a draught of the Hydraspis, ordered one to be made, and trial to be made of it on the Danube. The place chosen for that purpose, was where the river, uniting its channels, forms a whirlpool, and thence rolls itself with an extraordinary rapidity; the wind also then happened to be boisterous. There were present three principal officers of the imperial court, besides a vast number of meaner people, drawn thither by curiosity. All were surprised and pleased at the sight of a man, accoutered with this Hydraspis or water-buckler, moving about in the current without danger, even where it was most rapid, and easily making his way with the stream, or in an eddy, though indeed he found it pretty difficult to cross or go against the river, which is not strange, since to advance against a smaller stream, requires great labour, even with the help of oars, poles, towing, and horses.

The uses of this new machine are self-evident: the author, in his dedication, in high Dutch, of the Hydraspis, to his imperial majesty, mentions four. 1. It may be of signal service in a shipwreck, putting a person in as much safety, amidst the vast and raging waters, as a goose or duck. Besides, he need not strip himself of his clothes, or suffer hunger, because he may carry food enough with him for fourteen days or more. It may be the means of escaping the danger of an inundation, or torrent from the

mills. For, if the good man of the house be but provided with this machine in his garret, it will be easy for him to escape, and save besides one or two of his little ones, and carry off some of his richest movables. 3. It may be of service in war; for instance, when a body of troops is ordered to dislodge the enemy from some posts, or secretly to pass a river for reconnoitring; especially as upon landing, the Hydraspis can be scarce so much a burden to the soldier as the ancient shield. 4. The invention may also be applied to the performance of several recreations and sports in the water, where a person may represent a syren, and delight the hearers with music, or with hunting of ducks and other water-fowl. The author ingeniously owns, that his imperial majesty's president of the water-works found some fault with the clumsy round and flat structure of his machine, which might have been made of a convex figure, like a skate. He was however pleased that so knowing a man as the president testified his approbation of the rest, by his censure of only one particular; but he thinks we ought not to be solicitous about beauty or elegance, when the case concerns a man's life. But, if any one has a mind to arch the bottom of the Hydraspis, principally with regard to ornament, he fears that, by an increase of the bulk in so doing, the party will be less able to ply his thighs, or quicken his motion, upon occasion. For this reason, he persuades us not to seek after embellishments, unless they conduce at the same time, in a considerable degree, to usefulness. The dexterity of the artist in making the machine lighter, must doubtless render it less cumbersome; and he assures us that the Hydraspis, which he keeps for his own use, is not above half so heavy as that made at Vienna. Nor is he against making it more soft and easy, by lining the part which comes over the breast with leather, cotton or deer skin."

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

LADY Peveril, who was not apprehensive of any danger, thought there

would be great cruelty in dragging the cowardly boy into a scene which he regarded with so much apprehension. She gave him, therefore, a silver piece, and permitted him to return. The latter boon seemed even more acceptable than the first; for ere she could return the purse into her pocket, she heard the wooden clogs of her bold convoy in full retreat, by the way from whence they came.

Smiling within herself at the fear she esteemed so ludicrous, Lady Peveril ascended the stile, and was soon hid from the broad light of the moonbeams, by the numerous and entangled boughs of the huge elms, which, meeting from either side, totally overarched the old avenue. The scene was calculated to excite solemn thoughts; and the distant glimmer of a light from one of the numerous casements in the front of Moultrasie-Hall, which lay at some distance, was calculated to make them even melancholy. She thought of the fate of that family—of the deceased Mrs. Bridgenorth, with whom she had often walked in this very avenue, and who, though a woman of no high parts or accomplishments, had always testified the deepest respect, and the most earnest gratitude, for such notice as she had shewn to her. She thought of her blighted hopes—her premature death—the despair of her self-banished husband—the uncertain fate of their orphan child, for whom she felt, even at this distance of time, some touch of a mother's affection.

Upon such sad subjects her thoughts were turned, when, just as she attained the middle of the avenue, the imperfect and chequered light which found its way through the sylvan arch-way, shewed her something which resembled the figure of a man. Lady Peveril paused a moment, but instantly advanced;—her bosom, perhaps, gave one startled throb, as a debt to the superstitious belief of the times, but she instantly repelled the thought of supernatural appearances. From those that were merely mortal, she had nothing to fear. A marauder on the game was the worst

character whom she was like to encounter ; and he would be sure to hide himself from her observation. She advanced, accordingly, steadily ; and, as she did so, had the satisfaction to observe, that the figure, as she expected, gave place to her, and glided away amongst the trees on the left-hand side of the avenue. As she passed the spot on which the form had been so lately visible, and bethought herself that this wanderer of the night might, nay must, be in her vicinity, her resolution could not prevent her mending her pace, and that with so little precaution, that, stumbling over the limb of a tree, which, twisted off by a late tempest, still lay in the avenue, she fell, and, as she fell, screamed aloud. A strong hand in a moment afterwards added to her fear by assisting her to rise, and a voice, to whose accents she was not a stranger, though they had been long unheard, said, "Is it not you, Lady Peveril?"

"It is I," said she, commanding her astonishment and fear ; "and if my ear deceive me not, I speak to Master Bridgenorth."

"I was that man," said he, "while oppression left me a name."

He spoke nothing more, but continued to walk beside her for a minute or two in silence. She felt her situation embarrassing ; and, to divest it of that feeling, as well as out of real interest in the question, she asked him, "How her god-daughter Alice now was?"

"Of god-daughter, madam," answered Major Bridgenorth, "I know nothing ; that being one of the names which have been introduced, to the corruption and pollution of God's ordinances. The infant who owed to your ladyship (so called) her escape from disease and death, is a healthy and thriving girl, as I am given to understand by those in whose charge she is lodged, for I have not lately seen her. And it is even the recollection of these passages, which in a manner impelled me, alarmed also by your fall, to offer myself to you in this time and mode, which in other res-

pects is no way consistent with my present safety."

"With your safety, Master Bridgenorth?" said the Lady Peveril ; "surely I could never have thought that was in danger?"

"You have some news then yet to learn, madam," said Major Bridgenorth ; "but you will hear, in the course of to-morrow, reasons why I dare not appear openly in the neighbourhood of my own property, and wherefore there is small judgment in committing the knowledge of my present residence to any one connected with Martindale Castle."

"Master Bridgenorth," said the lady, "you were, in former times, prudent and cautious—I hope you have been misled by no hasty impression—by no rash scheme—I hope—"

"Pardon my interrupting you, madam," said Bridgenorth. "I have indeed been changed—ay, my very heart within me has been changed. In the times to which your ladyship (so called) thinks proper to refer, I was a man of this world—bestowing on it all my thoughts—all my actions, save formal observances—little deeming what was the duty of a Christian man, and how far his self-denial ought to extend—even unto giving all as if he gave nothing. Hence, I thought chiefly on carnal things—on the adding of field to field, and wealth to wealth—of the balancing between party and party—securing a friend here, without losing a friend there.—But Heaven smote me for my apostacy, the rather that I abused the name of religion, as a self-seeker, and a most blinded and carnal will-worshipper—But I thank Him who has at length brought me out of Egypt."

In our day—although we have many instances of enthusiasm among us—we might still suspect one who avowed it thus suddenly and broadly, of hypocrisy, or of insanity ; but, according to the fashion of the times, such opinions as those which Bridgenorth expressed, were openly avowed as the ruling motives of men's actions. (Continued on page 122.)

BUONAPARTE'S CIPHER.

In the last number of the "Quarterly Review" there occurs the following mention of the means employed by Buonaparte's friends to maintain a correspondence with him while at St. Helena.

"Newspapers (quite innocently on the part of their editors) were made a channel of secret communication. A cipher was established, by which,

what appeared only an ordinary advertisement, conveyed information from his partizans in Europe."

This passage has recalled to our recollection a curious Cipher Proclamation circulated in France previous to Napoleon's return from Elba in 1815, a copy of which was in the hands of one or more persons in every regiment in the French service. It ran thus:—

NEYIPTUH! KLMEPP HWDL PMNTC GLZST; EGGGR ZUHZGZHG BREX
EPEN HDHL IPTPMGGW QTBH WQ HHHWMRGF HHYPQPPP PEZ
PDAARZPI U YY XETBNP. TGACRE LGAIZ HDCEY ODCWQNCPTZ W
XZWWF FDV BCKH Q MBKWGMKL NGAODWA Z WY XSETEZ; KZL
YQTWWF IXYCUKBCG ZEXGGZRC P'NPP, PI UMBCAZIGFI SRH INAUDCC!

To reduce this seeming chaos of letters to order, and extract a meaning from their obscurity, recourse must be had to the annexed Table and Key.

TABLE.

A	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	k	l	m
B	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	w	x	y	z
C	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	k	l	m
D	z	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	w	x	y
E	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	k	l	m
F	y	z	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	w	x
G	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	k	l	m
H	x	y	z	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	w
I	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	k	l	m
K	w	x	y	z	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u
L	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	k	l	m
M	u	w	x	y	z	n	o	p	q	r	s	t
N	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	k	l	m
O	t	u	w	x	y	z	n	o	p	q	r	s
P	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	k	l	m
Q	s	t	u	w	x	y	z	n	o	p	q	r
R	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	k	l	m
S	r	s	t	u	w	x	y	z	n	o	p	q
T	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	k	l	m
U	q	r	s	t	u	w	x	y	z	n	o	p
W	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	k	l	m
X	p	q	r	s	t	u	w	x	y	z	n	o
Y	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	k	l	m
Z	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	w	x	y	z	n

The KEY (which may be changed at pleasure) is, in this instance, LA FRANCE, ET MA FAMILLE (France and my family); it is thus used:—

Look in the column of capitals for L, which is the first letter of the KEY;

then cast your eye along the division of the TABLE in which it occurs, till you meet with N, the corresponding letter in the PROCLAMATION, and set down the letter which stands above or below it, viz. F. Proceed in the

same manner with the second letter in the KEY, and the second in the PROCLAMATION, which will produce R; and so on with the remainder, till all the letters in the KEY are exhausted, when you must recommence with L. By this means you will arrive at the meaning of the cipher.—We request our readers to employ their ingenuity in discovering it, and shall be happy to receive a solution from any one of them, for insertion in our next number.

THE QUARTERLY REVIEWERS,
In their article on the works of Sir Charles H. Williams, quote his satirical ode on Pulteney's elevation to the peerage, which contains the following passage:—

“ Say, Muse, how he mark'd the new year,
By increasing our Taxes and Stocks;
They say how he chang'd to a Peer,
Fit companion for Edgumbe and Fox.”

Upon this they remark, “ We wish the editor had explained the sneer at Sir Charles's own dearest friends in the last line:” but, a little consideration will shew that no sneer was intended, except against Putteney. The concluding couplet should have been thus pointed:—

“ Then say how he chang'd to a Peer,—
Fit companion for Edgumbe and Fox !”

The irony of the last line is thus rendered more obvious. It is just as if a satirist of the present period were to say, “ Cobbett has been created a peer:—a fit companion, truly, for Anglesea and Wellington !”

“ In their notice of Jouy's “ Sylla,” the Reviewers reproach the managers of our theatres for not representing Richard III as written by Shakspeare, instead of Cibber's compilation. They ought to have known that the former piece was revived at Covent-Garden in 1821, and after being performed two or three times to empty houses, was necessarily laid upon the shelf. The fact is, that, as an ACTING-PLAY, Cibber's is the best.

March 6

PRICK.

Interesting Varieties.

NEWSPAPERS.—To the wisdom of Queen Elizabeth, and the prudence of Burleigh, we owe the introduction of Newspapers in this country, the first of which, called “ The English Mercurie,” and printed during the impending invasion by the Spanish Armada, is still preserved in the British Museum, being dated 23d July, 1588. From 1588 to 1622, few of these publications appeared; but the victories of Gustavus Adolphus, having excited the curiosity of our countrymen, a weekly paper, called “ The News of the Present Week,” was printed. After some time, this was continued under another title, and ultimately it was succeeded by “ The German and Swedish Intelligencer.” These papers were originally issued in the shape of small 4to. pamphlets, and continued so till, in 1661, Sir Roger L'Estrange published “ The Public Intelligencer,” in the present shape of newspapers. “ The London Gazette ” was published in 1665, under the title of “ The Oxford Gazette; ” it having been printed at Oxford during a session of parliament, held there on account of the plague then raging in London; and from this period, it is curious to trace the progression and increase of these interesting vehicles of information. From 1661 to 1688, no less than 70 papers were published, under different titles. After the revolution, “ The Orange Intelligencer ” appeared; and thence, to 1692, there were 26 different others brought forward. From an advertisement in “ The Athenian Gazette ” of 1696, it appears that the coffee houses in London were then supplied with nine newspapers every week, exclusive of Lists of Votes of Parliament, but there is no mention of any one daily. In 1698, 18 papers were published, of which only “ The London Courant ” was a daily paper. In 1724, the number was three daily, six weekly, and three new evening papers, every week. In 1782, the number of copies issued in England, amounted to 15,005,760. The total

number of separate papers published in Great Britain and Ireland in 1808, was 213. In 1818 there were about 69 printed in London alone; 124 in the country; 50 in Ireland; 27 in Scotland; and 8 in the British Islands. Since that period a still farther increase has doubtless taken place in their numbers.

BURLESQUE SONNET,

On a Youth who died by overeating
Fruit.—Illustrative of the ambiguities of our language.

Currants have check'd the currents of
my blood,
And Berries brought me to be buried
here:

Pears have pared off my body's hardi-
hood,

And Plumbs and Plumbers spare not
one so spare.

Fair would I feign my fall: so fair a
fare

Lessens not fault, yet 'tis a lesson good.
Gilt will not long hide guilt: such thin-
wash'd ware

Wears quickly, and its rude touch
soon is rued.

Grave on my grave some sentence grave
and terse,

That lies not as it lies upon my clay,
But in a gentle strain of unstrained
verse,

Preys all to pity a poor patty's prey:
Rehearses I was fruitful to my hearse;
Tells that my days are told, and soon
I'm toll'd away.

LOVE'S VICTIM.

BY J. WILNINGTON FLEMING.

DARK is the night, and late the hour,
And tempests ride the air,

And fast the cold and pelting shower
Is dripping from my hair:

My feet are wounded by the steep,
And drench'd my shiv'ring form;

O! wake thee, love, if thou dost sleep,
And shield me from the storm!

My sire has spurn'd me from his hall,
To range the wide world free;

My crime, if that a crime we call,
Was but my love for thee.

And since I did too much confide,
And yield my virgin charms,

O! hide me from the scowl of pride,
Within thy faithful arms!

Look on this burden that I bear,
And call thy vows to mind;
Thy weeping infant claims thy care,
O! be not, love, unkind!
Hush thee, my babe, I hear him near,
Be all my sorrows dumb;
Ah, no! too much I have to fear
Thy father will not come!

Great God! what means that struggling
gasp?

Again,—and now 'tis o'er;
How chill,—how pale within my grasp,—
My infant is no more!

Stay, dearest, for thy mother too
Is hast'ning to her fate:
Our sleep of death thy sire shall view,
And weep his crime too late!

The Whitt's Nunchion.

ONE of the Dukes of Bedford (I forget which) was deprived of his title for losing his substance at the gaming table. Were this precedent acted upon in the present day, what an increase of commoners should we gain from the pigeons of St. James's-street!

THE present grand Duke of Tuscany, when at Florence, generally honours the theatre with his presence during the early part of the performance, on which occasions, the last act of the play is not unfrequently the first represented. Should such be the pleasure or caprice of the sovereign, I suspect our English Dangles would be apt to stare, were Othello to be advertised by particular desire, and to commence at the catastrophe.

AN officer, attached to the British army of occupation, was asked by a friend, who paid him a visit at Cambray, if the soldiers could speak any French? "Oh yes," replied he, "they all know one sentence—Eau-de-vie toute-suite!"

THE French army is still distinguished for its politeness and gallantry, as the following instance will exemplify:—

Colonel Harvey of the Dragoons, the late private secretary to his grace the Duke of Wellington, had the misfortune to lose an arm while serving

in the Peninsula. On his recovery, however, he rejoined his regiment, and in a subsequent action led his men to the charge with his accustomed intrepidity. In the heat of the conflict, a French officer, conspicuous by his courage, rode up to encounter him, when perceiving his defenceless condition, he dropped the suspended sabre, made a polite apology, and passed on.

It appears by the following letter received by Mr. Dibdin during his management of the Circus, that dramatic compositions were by no means scarce at that period.

"Sir, I send you two operas. If neither of them should meet with your approbation, I'll send you two more!"

THE Cossacks have always been remarkable for the celerity of their movements.—In the war between Russia and Turkey they crossed the Boristhenes with their usual dispatch, and cut to pieces a number of their Turkish enemies. The following curious version of the newspaper-account of that transaction was given by an illiterate Lothian farmer, who, on his return from Edinburgh, was asked what were the news? "News! bad news indeed!" said he: "the cursed Goshawks have crossed over to Barrowstonness, and killed all the Turks."

It is said that his majesty, when Prince Regent, sent a bunch of grapes from his table to the author of "Waverley." The fruit was in consequence carried to Walter Scott, at that time in London, who took but two single grapes, observing "They were all he was entitled to." From this it is inferred that this celebrated bard has merely supplied the poetry interspersed throughout the Scotch novels, and is not, as is generally supposed, the author of those splendid pieces of imagination.

It is well known that Mozart, like many other great geniuses, was by no means of an economical habit. Notwithstanding the large sums with which the sale of his compositions

continually supplied him, his profusion not unfrequently left him without a ducat in his purse. Thus situated, his charity was implored by a mendicant, whose squalid appearance at once proclaimed his misery, and secured the compassion of his auditor, who, anxious to relieve, though without the immediate power, bade the suppliant follow to a coffee-house, where, pulling a sheet of music paper from his pocket, he composed a waltz on the instant, delivered it to the beggar with a letter, and told him to take them both to his publisher, who, on the receipt, gave the astonished and delighted bearer, thirteen golden ducats for his trouble. This was indeed a glorious way of turning notes into cash!

A general officer passing through St. James's palace after twelve o'clock, the sentinel on duty of course challenged him with "Who goes there?" "The devil," replied the officer, "Pass, devil, and go to hell!" returned the witty soldier.

EPIGRAM TO TALLEYRAND.

Seven cities boasted Homer's birth—tis true,
But twenty boast of not producing you.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The correspondent who criticises "Nobody" should recollect the fable of the Old Man and his Ass, and moreover purchase a spelling-book: he says he dislikes the plan "persued" by us;—offers some "desections" of our articles, and talks about "a most appropriate epithet." "Let those teach others, who themselves excel." Two of H. H.'s pieces shall appear. The Epitaphs sent by Veritas are droll, but may be met with in every collection of such things. Anecdotes by T. Young and R. L. are stale. We cannot insert Enigmas, &c. till we have the solutions.

ERRATUM. We request our readers will correct a strange blunder at page 100. column 2, line 16; for "trees made of ships," read "horses made of trees." We are obliged to B. who pointed out this error.

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THE NIC-NAC;

OR,
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 16.

SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 1823.

PRICE 1d

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove."
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it. SHAKESPEARE.

EGYPTIAN CAVERNS.

THE following interesting relation is extracted from Legh's "Journey in Egypt and the Country beyond the Cataracts." In March, 1813, Mr. Legh (accompanied by a Mr. Smelt and an American, named Barthow) was on his voyage down the Nile, when between Siout and Miniet the incident occurred which is the subject of the annexed narrative. A Greek named Demetrio, had reported to them the existence, near Manfalout, of certain pits or caverns, containing the mummies of crocodiles, of which they had hitherto seen no specimens in Egypt.—Desiring to examine these, they quitted the banks of the river, and at the village of Amabdi engaged four Arabs to be their guides to the caverns, which they found at a short distance, but within the confines of the desert. A circular pit, about 18 feet in depth, brought them down to the level of the excavations; three of the Arabs descended with them, and with lighted torches they made their way through various winding passages, without finding more than a few fragments of the crocodile mummies. The following part of the narrative we may best give in Mr. Legh's own words:—

"Our curiosity was still unsatisfied: we had been wandering for more than an hour in low subterranean passages, and felt considerably fatigued by the irksomeness of the posture in which we had been obliged to move, and the heat of our torches in those narrow and low galleries. But the Arabs spoke so confidently of succeeding in this second trial, that we were induced once more to attend them. We found the opening of the chamber which we now approached, guarded by a trench of unknown depth, and wide enough to require a good leap. The first Arab jumped the ditch, and

we all followed him. The passage we entered was extremely small, and so low in some places as to oblige us to crawl flat on the ground, and almost always on our hands and knees. The intricacies of its windings resembled a labyrinth; and it terminated at length in a chamber much smaller than that we had left; but, like it, containing nothing to satisfy our curiosity. Our search hitherto had been fruitless; but the mummies might not be far distant; another effort, and we might still be successful.

"The Arab whom I followed, and who led the way, now entered another gallery, and we all continued to move in the same manner as before, each preceded by a guide. We had not gone far before the heat became excessive;—for my own part, I found my breathing extremely difficult; my head began to ache most violently, and I had a most distressing sensation of fulness about the breast. We felt we had gone too far, and yet were almost deprived of the power of returning. At this moment the torch of the first Arab went out. I was close to him, and saw him fall on his side: he uttered a groan—his legs were strongly convulsed, and I heard a rattling noise in his throat—he was dead. The Arab behind me, seeing the torch of his companion extinguished, and conceiving he had stumbled, passed me, advanced to his assistance, and stooped. I observed him appear faint, totter, and fall in a moment:—he also was dead. The third Arab came forward, and made an effort to approach the bodies, but stopped short. We looked at each other in silent horror. The danger increased every instant: our torches burnt faintly; our breathing became more difficult; our knees tottered under us, and we felt our strength nearly gone.

"There was no time to be lost.

R

The American, Barthow, cried to us to take courage, and we began to move back as fast as we could. We heard the remaining Arab shouting after us, calling us Caffres, imploring our assistance, and upbraiding us with deserting him. But we were obliged to leave him to his fate, expecting every moment to share it with him. The windings of the passages through which we had come, increased the difficulty of our escape; we might take a wrong turn, and never reach the great chamber we had first entered. Even supposing we took the shortest road, it was but too probable our strength would fail us before we arrived. We had each of us, separately and unknown to one another, observed attentively the different shapes of the stones which projected into the galleries we had passed, so that each had an imperfect clue to the labyrinth we had now to retrace. We compared notes, and only on one occasion had a dispute, the American differing from my friend and myself:—in this dilemma, we were determined by the majority, and fortunately were right. Exhausted with fatigue and terror, we reached the edge of the deep trench, which remained to be crossed before we got into the great chamber. Mustering all my strength, I leaped, and was followed by the American. Smelt stood on the brink, ready to drop with fatigue. He called to us—"for God's sake to help him over the fosse, or at least to stop, if only for five minutes, to allow him to recover his strength." It was impossible—to stay was death, and we could not resist the desire to push on, and reach the open air. We encouraged him to summon all his force, and he cleared the trench. When we reached the open air, it was one o'clock, and the heat in the sun 160°. Our sailors, who were waiting for us, had luckily a *BARDAN* full of water, which they sprinkled upon us; but though a little refreshed, it was not possible to climb the sides of the pit: they unfolded their turbans, and slinging them round our bodies, drew us to the top.

"Our appearance alone, without our guides, naturally astonished the

Arab, who had remained at the entrance of the cavern; and he anxiously enquired for his friends. To have confessed they were dead, would have excited suspicion: he would have supposed we had murdered them, and have alarmed the inhabitants of Amabdi, to pursue us, and to revenge the death of their friends. We replied, therefore, they were coming, and were employed in bringing out the mummies we had found, which was the cause of their delay. We lost no time in mounting our asses, recrossed the Desert, and passed hastily by the village, to regain the ferry at Manfalout."

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

AFTER some farther conversation, the tread of horses was heard on the road on which they held this singular dialogue. Bridgenorth listened a moment, and then said, "Forget that you have seen me—name not my name to your nearest or dearest—lock my counsel in your breast—profit by it, and it shall be well with you."

So saying, he turned from her, and plunging through a gap in the fence, regained the cover of his own wood, along which the path still led.

One or two of the foremost made towards her at increased speed; challenged her as they advanced with the cry of "Stand! Who goes there?" The foremost who came up, however, exclaimed, "Mercy on us, if it be not my lady!" and Lady Peveril, at the same moment, recognized one of her own servants. Her husband rode up immediately afterwards, with, "How now, dame Margaret? What makes you abroad so far from home, and at an hour so late?"

Lady Peveril mentioned her visit at the cottage, but did not think it necessary to say aught of having seen Major Bridgenorth; afraid, it may be, that her husband might be displeased with that incident.

"Charity is a fine thing, and a fair," answered Sir Geoffrey; "but I must tell you, you do ill, dame, to wander about the country like a quack-salver, at the call of every old woman who has a cholic-fit; and at this time

of night especially, and when the land is so unsettled besides."

"I am sorry to hear that it is so," said the lady. "I had heard no such news."

"News!" repeated Sir Geoffrey; "Why here has a new plot broken out among the Roundheads, worse than Venner's by a butt's length; and who should be so deep in it as our old neighbour Bridgenorth? There is search for him every where; and I promise you, if he is found, he is like to pay old scores."

"Then I am sure, I trust he will not be found," said Lady Peveril.

"Do you so?" replied Sir Geoffrey.

"Now I, on my part, hope that he will; and it shall not be my fault if he be not; for which effect I will presently ride down to Moultrassie, and make strict search, according to my duty; there shall neither rebel nor traitor earth so near Martindale Castle, that I will assure them. And you, my lady, be pleased for once to dispense with a pillion, and get up, as you have done before, behind Saunders, who shall convey you safe home."

She accordingly rode behind the groom to the castle; and when Sir Geoffrey came back, to her great relief, he was without any prisoner. He then explained more fully than his haste had before permitted, that an express had come down to Chesterfield, with news from Court of a purposed insurrection amongst the old Commonwealth-men; and that Bridgenorth, said to be lurking in Derbyshire, was one of the principal conspirators.

After some time, this report of a conspiracy seemed to die away like many others of that period. The warrants were recalled, but nothing more was seen or heard of Major Bridgenorth.

About this time also, Lady Peveril, with many tears, took a temporary leave of her son Julian, who was sent, as had long been intended, for the purpose of sharing the education of the young Earl of Derby. Although the boding words of Bridgenorth

sometimes occurred to Lady Peveril's mind, she did not suffer them to weigh with her in opposition to the advantages, which the patronage of Countess of Derby secured to her son.

The plan seemed to be in every respect successful; and when, from time to time, Julian visited the house of his father, Lady Peveril had the satisfaction to see him, on every occasion, improved in person and in manner, as well as ardent in the pursuit of more solid acquirements. In process of time, he became a gallant and accomplished youth, and travelled for some time upon the continent with the young Earl. This was the more especially necessary for the enlarging of their acquaintance with the world; because the Countess had never appeared in London, or at the court of King Charles, since her flight to the Isle of Man in 1660; but had resided in solitary and aristocratic state, alternately on her estates in England and in that island.

This had given to the education of both the young men, otherwise as excellent as the best teachers could render it, something of a narrow and restricted character; but though the disposition of the young Earl was lighter and more volatile than that of Julian, both the one and the other had profited, in a considerable degree, by the opportunities afforded them. It was Lady Derby's strict injunction to her son, now returning from the continent, that he should not appear at the court of Charles. But having been for some time of age, he did not think it absolutely necessary to obey her in this particular; and had remained for some time in London, partaking the pleasures of the gay court there, with all the ardour of a young man bred up in comparative seclusion.

In order to reconcile the Countess to this transgression of her authority (for he continued to entertain for her the profound respect in which he had been educated), Lord Derby agreed to make a long sojourn with her in her favourite island, which he abandoned almost entirely to her management.

(Continued on page 138.)

BUONAPARTE'S CIPHER.

IF we may form an opinion from the number of communications we have received upon this subject, we must needs infer that it has excited much interest in the minds of our readers. Many of them have explained the enigmatical composition, but as their solutions are all equally correct, we refrain from particularizing any of them. The PROCLAMATION deciphered runs thus:—

“*Français ! votre pays était trahi ; votre Empereur seul peut vous remettre dans la position splendide que convient à la France. Donnez toute votre confiance à celui qui vous a toujours conduit à la gloire : ses aigles planeront encore en l'air, et étonneront les nations !*”

TRANSLATION.

“*Frenchmen ! your country was betrayed ; your Emperor alone can replace you in the splendid position which belongs to France. Give your entire confidence to him who has always led you to glory : his eagles will yet soar aloft, and fill the nations with astonishment !*”

THE WEATHER.

THE following observations on the weather—a subject which is always in season, however unseasonable the weather may be—are from the pen of Montgomery, the author of “*the World before the Flood,*” &c.

The second topic of conversation in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, when strangers or acquaintance meet accidentally or ceremoniously, is—the weather. Happily it is an inexhaustible one, for though the same changes are everlastingly rung on half a dozen ideas in half a dozen forms of words, yet as it is always some sort of weather, and every body knows what sort that is, there cannot be less occasion, in the present day, for one person to tell another that it is fine or foul, hot or cold, than there was five thousand years ago, nor will there be less for as many years to come.—There may be something ludicrous in the perpetual recurrence to this subject, the in-

stant that encountering friends have disposed of each other's health,—yet nothing surely is more natural than that, after enquiries and answers concerning what affects them individually, people should speak of that which affects them generally, and thence make the transition to circumstances contingent or remote. If there were neither health nor weather in the world, it is hard to conceive how our phlegmatic countrymen, when they come together, should ever get nearer each other's thoughts than an electrifying jolt of elbows would bring them, or an unintended exchange of looks, in which the eyes of both, as if detected in forbidden peeping, would be thrown to the ground by the shock, and be unable to raise themselves higher than the antagonist's knee-buckle, till they perceived his legs carrying off his body. Then indeed people would be as glad to see their neighbours' backs as they now are to see their faces, since there are at least two subjects on which the dullest as well as the most brilliant can immediately enter upon talk, and which are in fact the keys that open all mouths and all minds.

If there be a meeting of divines, from his grace of O. to his reverence the curate of D. at a Visitation ;—of doctors round a death-bed, to determine whether it is better to do any thing or nothing for the patient ; of lawyers on the Circuit, respecting the splitting of a hair in a north or north-easterly direction ; of judges on a plea in arrest of judgment, when life or death depends upon the spelling of a word ; of aldermen at a corporation dinner ; of the cabinet council on a question of peace or war ; of Major Cartwright and William Cobbett for parliamentary reform ; of the Holy Alliance on a nice point of legitimacy ; of a band of conspirators to overthrow the government ; or a gang of pick-pockets to plan a row and a robbery in the street ;—the weather takes precedence of all these mighty affairs, and till divines, and physicians, and lawyers, and judges, and aldermen, and statesmen, and patriots, and sovereigns, and conspirators, and pick-pockets, have agreed upon that indis-

pensable preliminary; whether the sun shines or not, the world must stand still for them, or go to rack and ruin if it will. So much is our personal enjoyment influenced by the state of the elements around us, that not only our limbs, and those incomprehensible things called nerves, are affected by it, without our choice,—sometimes even without our consciousness,—but our spirits are exhilarated or oppressed by a serene or foggy morning; a flash of lightning shoots through the soul, a snow-storm beats into the region of intellect, and a keen frost binds up the stream of thought.—Perhaps there is no state of suffering,—except the hey-day of madness,—in which the ordinary inclemency of the atmosphere is indifferent to man, so kindred with the material universe is the exquisite organization of that part of him which CAN die. Criminals appended to the gallows, and waiting for the fall of the drop to launch them beyond the reach of all vicissitudes below, standing on the step between two worlds,—have been known to cower under the umbrella of the officiating chaplain, to shelter from a shower of rain, during the singing of the last psalm.

All men may well be weather-wise, since not an instant of sublunary being passes, in which some measure of our comfort or misery does not depend upon the quarter from which the wind blows, the colours and shapes of the clouds, the appearance or eclipse of the heavenly bodies; and though in this age of reading and writing, none but simpletons consult the horoscope for the fortunes of their lives, yet for the fortune of every moment as it flies, and of the next hour, or day, or week (according to circumstances), the phases and phenomena of sun, moon, and stars, and the hemisphere in which they move, are as anxiously scrutinized and explored by the most enlightened philosophers of modern days, as they were for deeper insight into futurity by the wizards of olden time.—At one season of the year more than all the rest, the fickleness of the weather is alternately the torment and delight of the

idle and the industrious,—when “the human face divine,” like the face of a dial, is continually towards heaven, and shines or darkens with the day:—that season is autumn; when the idle are seeking refuge from themselves in places of dissipation, and the industrious are gathering in the harvest. Then it is that those who belong to either of these classes watch the approach of a cloud upon the clear blue sky, as they would the march of an invading enemy, and gaze upon a weather-cock with as much solicitude as if their brain were turning with its motions.—Then it is, if they awake in the night (provided they can sleep at all), they hearken not for thieves, nor the clock-striking, nor the cock-crowing, but for the rain or the wind; and if a shower patters against the windows, the one sighs over the failure of a projected excursion, the other over sheaves beaten down in the fields, and corn sprouted in the ear;—then turning round, perhaps they dream, to their heart's content, of the pleasure which must not be partaken on the morrow, or the harvest which must not be brought home. Such a time of hope and fear, expectation, desire, and disappointment, is the Autumn; during which, not only the minds of those who rear the precious fruits of the earth, and those who seem born but to devour them, are agonized with apprehensions from every breeze that bears a vapour on its wing, but the multitude of the labouring poor, of every occupation, and the benevolent who sympathize in their concerns, are harassed and agitated about the aspect of the season, lest the staff of life should fail, and want and wretchedness, with ten thousand accompanying evils, should lay waste the land, and drive hunger to despair. Mark-Lane, meanwhile, rises and falls in its table of prices with the lowering and clearing of the sky; and the Stocks,—whose sensibilities are moved by all things that ARE, and that ARE NOT,—are duly affected by the weather, and fluctuate through a sea of fractions, as the probability comes or goes of money being wanted to speculate in foreign corn.

The variety of our climate, however, often falsifies the random, yet wary prognostications of almanack-jobbers, who specify rain on four or five days of every month, "the day before or the day after," (making half the time, and they might as well add the days between to secure the other half), so that if it rains once in the term, the shower was absolutely foretold in a sweeping clause, twelve months before it fell, which is quite enough (though miscarriage occurs in fifty other instances), to keep up the reputation of "Francis Moore, physician," and others, who have been prophesying in this manner, alive and dead, for a century past;—we observe, that the variety of our climate not only falsifies the oracles, but barometers themselves, as if the elements were playing at hide and seek with the subtle spirit that inhabits the "glassy tower," and betrays their secrets to inquisitive mortals. Nay, even "the man and the woman" that live in "the weather-house,"—a most unexemplary married couple, who never can stay indoors together,—are often equally confounded, so that with all the experience of ages, added to the cat-gut instinct that guides them, the lady, who in ordinary times monopolizes fair weather, may come forth in her gossamer-array, and bear the drenching of twenty-four hours, and when she returns, not choosing to infringe on her husband's province,—out he may bolt, muffled, and booted, and broad-brimmed at top, to stand—not "the pelting of the pitiless storm," but the July blaze of a September sun, for an equal length of time.—If inanimate matter, which can neither commit folly nor mistake, thus fails to give the wonted warning or assurance of weather for four and twenty hours, it need not surprise us that rational beings, with their limited observation and imperfect experience, should err in their calculations of phenomena, the laws of which are as secret as those of magnetism and electricity, and only known to exist because their results are obvious.

We said just now that "all men may well be weather-wise," and in

the usual ironical sense of the phrase (though probably in no other), they all are so, for it is as much as most of us can do to tell what kind of weather it is,—information which we are very ready to communicate, as has been already observed,—but with regard to what it will be a few hours hence, the future must have become the past before we were prepared to say that. However, if we know not at best what to affirm of any day in this respect, till it is over, most of us have the humility to think that we could make better weather ourselves, if we could make it at all; this, however, being quite out of the question, we can find fault, and we do so, with that which is made to our hands, but not to our tastes. No wonder that we all fancy ourselves politicians, who could govern empires more ably than those who were born to sceptres, or have grown grey in conducting affairs of state, since the most ignorant among us,—and the most intelligent as well as the most ignorant, too frequently,—imagine, that they could exercise the functions of almighty Providence more beneficially than the Creator and Upholder of heaven and earth. Who has not murmured a thousand times at the dispensations of sunshine and rain, because they have thwarted his plans, or proved inscrutable to his investigation? Who that takes an interest in the produce of the soil, and the maturing of its fruits, has not deemed a frost, a blight, a shower, unseasonable and—but we dare not say it out—ALMOST unwise and unjust? Yet to this, it may be feared, many of our repinings would come, if they were put to the moral torture, and made to confess their true nature on the rack of conscience.

Interesting Varieties.

THE TWO BRACELETS.

A Farmer General, one Monsieur B....., Who dwelt in France ere Boney held the throne,
Lived like a prince, from every trouble free,
Except a wife,—(th' exception's large & I own),

For she was fat as any marchioness,
And given to extravagance in dress.

One day she bought a pair of bracelets—
such

As few but royal danisels would bespeak;
They cost—I cannot recollect how much,
But they were quite magnificent—
unique:

And, having clasp'd them on, away she
flies

Off to the Opera, to shew her prize.

It happen'd that the Queen was there
that night,

Just opposite the box that madam took,
And on the bracelets with intense delight
Frequently look'd—or else appear'd to
look:

For she took special care to have them
seen,

As if on purpose to outvie the Queen.

Soon to the box-door came a page, at-
tir'd

In the Queen's proper liv'ry, all in stile,
And, in the name of majesty, requir'd
One of the bracelets for a little while,
That by her eye she might the pattern
take,

And order some of the exact same make.

Off went the sparkling bauble in a trice,
While her roug'd cheeks with exulta-
tion burn,

As bowing to the Royal party thrice,
She patiently expected its return;

But when the Queen retired, and none
was sent,

Our dame began to wonder what it
meant.

A lord in waiting soon confirm'd her
fears,

"Oh that pretended page I've often
seen,

A noted sharper,—has been such for
years,

Madam, you're robb'd,—he came not
from the Queen:

I know the rogue, and should have had
him taken,

But that he slipp'd away, and saved his
bacon."

Boiling with anger, Madam called her
coach,

And drove to the Bureau de la Justice,
Where with loud tongue, and many a
keen reproach

About the shameful state of the police;
She call'd upon the Provost for relief,
And bade him send his men to catch the
thief.

Early next morn she heard the knocker's
din,

[big,
Her heart beat high, with expectation
When lo! the Provost's clerk was
usher'd in,

A formal, consequential little prig,
Who, with a mighty magisterial air
Hem'd! and began his business to de-
clare.

"Madam, a man is brought to our Bu-
reau,

[cost,
On whom we found a bracelet of great
And we are all anxiety to know

Whether or not it is the one you lost;
Wherefore I'll take the other, if you
please,

Just to compare, and see if it agrees."

"Dear sir, I'm overjoy'd—'tis mine, I'm
sure,

[boast!
Such a police as our's how few can
Here take the bracelet—keep the rogue
secure,

I'll follow you in half an hour at most:
Ten thousand thanks—I hope you'll
trounce the spark,

Open the door there, for the Provost's
clerk!"

O! how she chuckled as she drove along,
Settling what pangs the pilferer should
feel,

[strong,
No punishment appeared to her too
E'en should the wretch be broken on
the wheel,

For what infliction could be reckon'd
cruel,

For one who would purloin so rich a
jewel!

Arriv'd at the Bureau her joy finds vent,
"Well, Mr. Provost, where's the guilty
knave?"

The other bracelet by your clerk I sent,
Doubtless it matches with the one you
have:

Why, then, outstretch your mouth with
such surprise,

And goggle on me thus with all your
eyes?"

"La! bless me, ma'am, you're finely
hoax'd---good lack!

I sent no clerk, no thief have we found
out,

And the important little prig in black,
Was the accomplice of the page no
doubt,---

[one,
Methinks the rascals might have left you
But both your bracelets now are fairly
gone!"

THE SPHINX.

No. 1.

[As it is our aim to diversify the contents of our publication, in such a way as to adapt it to the taste of every reader, we shall occasionally dedicate a short space to the insertion of Enigmas, Paradoxes, Puzzles, &c. under the above title. Solutions to the various pieces contained 'in the SPHINX of one week, will be given in that of the week following; and we shall be happy to receive from such readers as may choose to exercise their ingenuity upon these trifles, the fruits of their labours, in any shape they may prefer—either in prose or verse—which shall always be inserted, if possessed of merit.]

A LOVER'S ADDRESS TO HIS MISTRESS.

Oh! u have comparison I I.

CHARADES.

1. My first we are all liable too, my second we are all fond of, my whole is an engine of destruction.

2. My second was given through my first to an old woman in the dark.

ENIGMAS.

1. Je suis ce que je suis, cependant je ne suis pas ce que je suis; car, si j'étois ce que je suis, je ne serois pas ce que je suis.

2. Venir Vent Pir
Un Cause Un

3. Je suis le capitaine de vingt-quatre hommes, et sans moi Paris seroit prit.

INSCRIPTION FOR A TOBACCO PAPER.

() had both () and a (), by both I set great store;
() lent my () to my (), and took his word therefore.
() ask'd my () of my (), and nought but words I got;
() lost my () and my (), for sue him I would not.
At length with () came my (), which pleas'd me very well;
() got my () but my () away quite from me fell.
() if I'd both () and a (), as I have had before,
() 'd keep my () and my (), and play the fool no more.

The Wit's Nunchion.

AN Irishman was giving an account of a room in which he slept,—“ You go up stairs, and up stairs, and up stairs, and then a little way in, and up stairs again.” “ What, I suppose you sleep in the garret?” “ I don't know what you call the garret, honey, but if the house was turned topsy-turvey, you'd certainly find me in the cellar.”

Two men disputing upon their genealogy, “ I can prove my family,” said the first, “ to have existed before the deluge.” “ And I,” replied the other, “ can prove mine from Adam.” “ And I mine, before Adam,” rejoined his opponent. “ You are right,” retorted the second, “ for before

Adam there were no animals but brutes.”

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. K., Abbastanza, A. Z., E. S. Carey, and M., merit our warmest thanks. Clio's packet will be made use of. Letters may be forwarded as J. K. mentions. The “ Humming-Bird ” shall appear. The English Cipher will be very acceptable. Poems by T. N., a Ghost Story by W. D. R., and Singular Intrepidity by J. J. have been received; also, communications from Frisk. T. C., Sampson, J. W. F., A. C., F. H. J., S. T. F., S. B., Grange, and Timon.

ERRATUM. The second letter in the eleventh word of the Cipher Proclamation, page 117, should be Z. instead of J.

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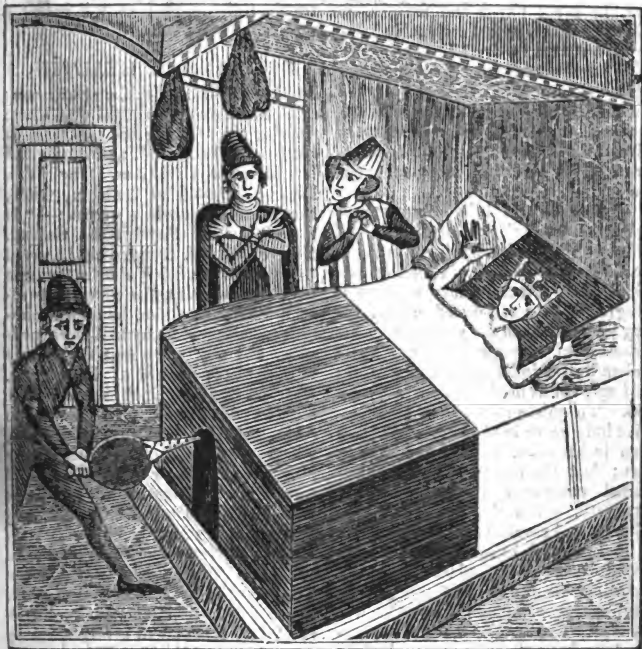
THE NIC-NAC; OR, ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 17.

SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 1823.

VOL. I

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



THE subject of our engraving is the death of Charles the Bad, King of Navarre, at Pampeluna, in the year 1386; as represented in an illuminated drawing, in a MS. copy of "Froissart's Chronicle," in the British Museum. That entertaining writer gives the following account of the catastrophe:—

"The kyng, being dysappointed in his determination to lay on his subjects greater taxes than they could beare, confined his Council closely in a room together, in feare of their lives; and it was supposed that by constraynt he had his desire, for he strake off thre of the heedes of such as were most contrary to his entente, to give fear

and ensample to others. Then there fell a marveyulous adventure, the which God sent like a myracle. This king of Naver well loved women, and had a fair damosell to his lover, for he was a wydower a long season. On a nyght he laye with her a space, and then retourned to his chambre in a fever, and said to his servantes, "Dresse my bedde, for I wyl rest me a season;" and so went to his bed, and trymbled for cold, and could take no heate. He was an aged man, about threscore yere of age, and his bedde was wont to be chafed with a bason with hot coles, to make him swet, whiche often tymes he used, and it dyd hym no hurte.

At this tyme his servaunts dyd the same; but, as God wolde, or the devyll, a burnynge flame toke the shetes, in suche maner that, before he coule be reskewed, he was burnte to the bowels, he being so wrapped betwene the shetes. He lyved fyftene dayes after, in great payne and mysery, so that physicke nor surgery coule helpe hym, but that he dyed."

Villaret's account of the transaction which follows, was collected from various historians and records to which he had access; it is somewhat more circumstantial than that of Froissart, from which it differs in some particulars:—

"One cannot help being struck with the tragical end of the king of Navarre, and acknowledging in it the traits of an invisible and terrible justice. This prince, whose memory is disgraced by a variety of crimes, being addicted from his youth to all the excesses of intemperance, was overtaken by the infirmities of premature old age, for at his death he was hardly 56. To quicken his blood, by excessive indulgence in pleasure almost frozen in his veins, he had recourse to art; but the factitious heat he procured completed the ruin of his strength, which declined daily. In this state, he used to wrap himself in a cloth dipped in spirit of wine, the effect of which he had proved in recruiting his vigour. One night, after leaving a woman whom he was fond of to excess, he ordered his accustomed remedy to be prepared. The servant who sewed him up, instead of cutting the thread, had the imprudence to apply a lighted candle to it. The flame instantly communicated itself to the cloth, and all the king's efforts to extricate himself from it were fruitless. His cries were dreadful; the fire penetrated and devoured all the parts of his body, without a possibility of helping him, till the cloth impregnated with the spirituous liquor was entirely consumed. He lived three days in incredible torments, praying incessantly for the arrival of death, too slow for his pains. According to Froissart, he passed, fifteen days in this horrible state. It is diffi-

cult not to indulge suspicions on the tragical death of this monarch. How came it that his domestics could not extinguish the flames? Was he so dejected, that not one of them was interested about his preservation? Be this as it may, so terrible a catastrophe must suggest to the reader a number of reflections."

DRINKING OF HEALTHS.

IN a book called "Healthe's Sicknesse; or, A commodious and brief discourse; prouing the drinking and pledging of Healthes to be Sinfull, and vtterly unlawful unto Christians," by Wm. Prymme, printed at London, 1628, the following anecdote occurs:—"It is recorded of Popelus the Second, King of Poland, that having incurred the displeasure of his Nobilitie, through his ill government, for which they intended to depose him, he fained himself to be very sicke, by his Queen's aduice; and thereupon sent for twenty of the chiefe princes of Pomerania, who had the principall voyce in the election of the Polonian kings, to come and visit him in his sickness, which they did accordingly. The king, upon their coming, requested them to elect his sonne to the kingdom after his decease, which thing they answered they would willingly doe, if the rest of the nobilitie would consent unto it. The queene in the mean time provides a cup of sudden poyson, of purpose to dispatch them, and presents it to them all to drinke the king her husband's health. They, to testify their love and allegiance to the king, dranke off the cup, as their manner was, unto his health, but to their own confusion and immediate death, and to the subversion of all the stocke and race of the Polonian princes: a sodaine and fearful, yet just judgment of God, upon these princes, who were much addicted to the drinking of healthes in former times. But loe the infinite justice of God on both hands. Out of the dead and poysoned carcasses, there issued such infinite troopes and swarmes of rattes and mice as chased Popelus, his wife, and all his children from place to place, both by sea and land, till at last they were

forced to flee to the strong Castle of Græconia, where they were devoured, and eaten up of these rattes and mice, in despite of guard and garrisons, and all those artes and pollicies of fire and water-works, that were used to secure them."

LETTER FROM A FRENCH OFFICER,

WHO WAS PRISONER OF WAR IN IRELAND, IN 1759, RESPECTING THE PERFORMERS, ON THE DUBLIN STAGE, AT THAT TIME.

I HAVE been vid my friend, Mr. Motie, veri often at de Comedie, vhere is dam high price; two livres and more for de gallerie; von half carry you to de opera at de Parterre; but, I am inform, dat de chef comedians trait demselve like de men of qualite, and de actrices have large sallairie, vich make de grand price. Dey be juste as vid us, some good, some baad. De principals are Messrs. Barrie, Voodvar, Mosope, Spaarke. Barrie be de fine person, tall and vell made, and do veri vell in de tragedie, when he no take too much pain how he valk, staand, or torn about; dat often spail all. Voodvar, when he do vell, is de inimitable; but he chuse to please de cansaile too often, vich bring de most monie. Mosope be de excellent for de tragedie, vich agree vell vid his phisonomie, person and vaice. 'Tis pity, vat I am told, dat he vas taght by anoder at de first, vich keep down his own genie. Spaarke be de camical dog, an make laaf all de varld vid his grimace. Dey could no do vidout him. Dere be oder comedians, who have deir merite. Dere is von Foote; but I no like him, for mimique de Frenchman. Dere is anoder, I forget his name, who mimique nothing but one kettle-drum, romble, romble, romble, tous-jours.

De vomen are all, vidout exception, dam ogly, vid ded eyes, for vanit of red on de cheek, no brilliancy, no life 'tall, or concupiscence vaterer; but in deir vay of playing (vich be much worse dan de French vay) von, too, or tree, be very good actrices. Von ma-

dam Fizenrie, morbleu! fright me in von tragedie. 'Tis de French tragedie pot in Englis, de Andromache, vich do vonderfully peint de power of love in voman's heart, in all de variete of strange pashons dat come, von after t'oder, or all togeder, when she resolves on von man, and no oder for spouse. Mon dieu! von time adore, von time hate de poor man; vill have him kill; because she love: den kill de man dat kill him, because she hate! veri fine all! but heven garde me from de like love. In oder parts, madam Fizenrie do vell, but is beste in von furie. Madame D'Ancere vid a leetle more red, vould be veri lovely; and is justely de Belle Angloise, but no de Franche beaute; and yet do most gail-larde among dem. She please moch all de milors always, do meny parts vel 'nough, an may have vat sallaire she please; dat is, from de maistre of de comedie as actrice.

Interesting Varieties.

GAMING REGIMEN.

SIR,—Calling yesterday morning upon a friend, whom I had left the night before in perfect health, I was a little surprised to find him sitting in his great chair, wrapped up very warm, with a large basin of water-gruel, and a little red book before him. Upon my expressing some concern for this sudden alteration in his health, he took me by the hand, burst out laughing, and desired me to be under no apprehensions, for that he was as well as ever he was in al his life, but that being engaged in a party at whist that night at the Bedford coffee-house, he was only preparing himself with a little cooling physic, and refreshing his memory with Mr. Hoyle's instructions. That many persons have reduced play to a science; that on the days they propose to play, they eat very little, and drink no wine, I very well knew; but this physicking is such a refinement upon gaming, as, I think, ought to be made publicly known, to prevent many honest fellows from losing their money they cannot tell how. What chance has a man who has dined

heartily on a sirloin of beef, and drunk a cheerful glass after it, with these gentry, who have been in training, as one may call it, all the morning? Through your means, therefore, Mr. NIC-NAC, let me advise your good honest hearty whist-players to beware of water-drinkers and physickers.

There is more need of this caution than good men would think.

SOHO-SQUARE.

BRIAREUS.

BARBAROUS STRATAGEM OF A MOORISH PRINCE.

HISTORY records a very singular and cruel scheme projected and executed by Mehemet Almhedi, king of Fez, a prince not less remarkable for his ambition than his refined craft and hypocrisy. He had a long war to maintain against some neighbouring nations, who refused to submit to his tyranny. He gained over them several victories, but having afterwards lost a battle, wherein he had exposed his troops with a blind fury, they were so dispirited, that they refused to go against the enemy. To inspire them with courage, he imagined the following stratagem:—

Having assembled secretly a certain number of officers, who were best affected to him, he proposed to them considerable rewards, if they would consent to be shut up for some hours in graves, as if they had been killed in battle; that he would leave them a sufficient vent for breathing, and that when, in consequence of a superstitious device he designed cunningly to spread through the army, they should happen to be interrogated, they were to answer, that they had found what their king had promised them: that they enjoyed the rewards of martyrdom, and that those who imitated them by fighting valiantly, and should die in that war, would enjoy the same felicity. The thing was executed as he had proposed. He laid his most faithful servants among the dead, covered them with earth, and left them a small vent for drawing breath. He afterwards entered the camp, and assembling the principal chiefs about midnight: "You are," said he, "the

soldiers of God, the defenders of the faith, and the protectors of the truth. Prepare to exterminate your enemies, who are likewise the enemies of the Most High, and depend upon it you will never find so sure an opportunity of being pleasing in his sight. But, as there may be dastards and stupid wretches among you, who do not believe my words, I am willing to convince them by the sight of a great prodigy.

"Go to the field of battle, ask those of your brethren who have been killed this day; they will assure you that they enjoy the most perfect happiness, for having lost their lives in this war." He then led them to the field of battle, where he cried out with all his might; "O assembly of faithful martyrs, make known to us how many wonders you have seen of the most high God!" They answered, "We have received from the Almighty infinite rewards, which the living can have no idea of." The chiefs, surprised at this answer, ran to publish it in the army; and revived courage in the hearts of the soldiery. Whilst this was transacted in the camp, the king, feigning an ecstasy, caused by this miracle, remained near the graves where his buried servants waited their deliverance; but he stopped up the holes through which they breathed, and sent them to receive, in the other world, by this barbarous stratagem, the reward they had made a declaration of to others.

YOUTHFUL DECORATION.

YOUTH is itself a decoration; we mistakingly adorn that part of life which least requires it, and neglect to provide for that which will want it most. It is for that sober period, when life has lost its freshness, the passions their intensity, and the spirits their hilarity, that we should be preparing; not to add a vacant mind to a form that has ceased to please. To provide no subsidiary aid to beauty while it lasts, and especially no substitute when it is departed, is to render life comfortless, and marriage dreary.

PAY THE PRINTER.

THIS article, while it amuses some of our friends, may also serve to refresh their memories, and to remind them that a work so extremely cheap as the NIC-NAC can only be maintained in a flourishing condition, by an extensive circulation, and prompt payment of the subscriptions.

The reader, commencing with the

centre P. in the bottom line, may proceed either to the right hand or to the left—pass upwards half way to the top, and then suddenly diverge in a transverse or oblique direction: in short, he may move his eye in any way that suits his fancy, but he will still find the letters invariably present to it that wholesome exhortation—**PAY THE PRINTER.**

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WEATHER TABLE.

NEW AND FULL MOON.	SUMMER.	WINTER.
If the new or full Moon enters into the first or last quarter of the hour of 12 at noon, or between the hours of 2 and 4	Very rainy	Snow and rain
4 and 6	Changeable	Fair and mild
6 and 8	Fair	Fair
8 and 10	{ Fair, if Wind at N. W. { Rainy, if wind at S. or S. W.	{ Fair and frosty, if wind at N. or N. E. { Rain or Snow, if S. or S. W.
10	Ditto	Ditto
2 A. M.	Fair	Fair and frosty
2 and 4	Ditto	{ Hard frost, unless wind S. or S. W. Snow — Stormy
4 and 6	{ Cold, with frequent showers	
6 and 8	Rain	Ditto, ditto
8 and 10	Wind and rain	Stormy weather
10 and 12	Changeable	{ Cold and rain, if wind N. snow if E. Cold, with high wind
	Frequent showers	

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NIC-NAC.

SIR,—The article upon the weather in your 16th number, has induced me to forward you the above Table, which being constructed upon philosophical considerations of the attraction of the Sun and Moon, in their several positions respecting the Earth, and con-

firmed by many years' actual observation, furnishes an observer, without farther trouble, with the knowledge of what kind of weather is most likely to take place in every month; and that so near the truth, that in a very few instances will it be found to fail. \$.

ANIMAL SAGACITY.

THERE is a chapter in one of our metaphysical writers, shewing how dogs make syllogisms. The illustration is decisive. A dog loses sight of his master, and follows him by scent till the road branches into three: he smells at the first and at the second, and then, without smelling further, gallops along the third. That animals should be found to possess in perfection every faculty which is necessary for their well-being, is nothing wonderful; the wonder would be if they did not: but they sometimes display a reach of intellect beyond this.

For instance—dogs have a sense of time, so as to count the days of the week. My grandmother had one, who trudged two miles every Saturday to market, to cater for himself in the shambles. I know another more extraordinary and well-authenticated example. A dog, which had belonged to an Irishman, and was sold by him in England, would never touch a morsel of food upon a Friday: the Irishman had made him as good a Catholic as he was himself. This dog never forsook the sick bed of his last master, and, when he was dead, refused to eat, and died also.

A dog of my acquaintance found a bitch in the streets, who had lost her master, and was ready to whelp. he brought her home, put her in possession of his kennel, and regularly carried his food to her, which it may be supposed he was not suffered to want, during her confinement. For his gallantry, his name deserves to be mentioned—it was Pincher. Some of his other acquaintances may remember him. Whenever Pincher saw a trunk packing up in the house, he absconded for the next four-and-twenty hours. He was of opinion that home was the best place.

SINGULAR CUSTOM.

AN odd custom is observed in Santa Maura, one of the Ionian Islands, in marriages. On the break of day, the bridegroom is placed in a kind of small car, drawn by two men, and conducted in front of his father-in-law's house. Here he remains until ten o'clock, im-

ploring the charity of all passers-by, who generally throw a small piece of coin into the basin he holds. At ten o'clock he is released from his situation, and invited to enter the house of his father-in-law, who greets him; adding, in conclusion, "that with so laborious a man, his daughter must be happy."—The couple are then conducted to church and married. It is usual to support the bridal bed upon four men's shoulders, who convey it to the husband's residence, together with all sorts of culinary articles.

INGENIOUS EXPEDIENT OF A HIGHLANDER.

FROM HALL'S TRAVELS IN SCOTLAND

IT was, and still is, a custom in many places in the Highlands, that whoever comes into a house after a person dies, and before such person is interred, or also after a child is born till it is baptized, must eat and drink in the house before they leave it. This being the custom, to save expences, and because they think it disrespectful to God to have an unbaptized child in the house, poor people generally have their children as soon baptized as possible. But it happened once to a poor man in this part of the country, that a river, as is often the case, ran between his house and the clergyman's, so that neither the poor man could get to the clergyman, nor the clergyman to the poor man's, in order to have the child baptized. The river was swollen by the gradual melting of the snow, and there was no bridge within twenty miles. The poor man's cheese, his bread, &c. was nearly expended! he therefore, on the one side of the river and the clergyman on the other, consulting what was to be done, agreed that the child should be brought to the river side; that the father, presenting the child, should take on the vows, as they term it, and the minister with a scoop, or Dutch ladle, should throw over the water, which was done, though with difficulty, owing to the breadth of the river; after which, the clergyman pronounced the name, prayed aloud, so as to be heard by the parent and his attendants on

the other side, and each went to their respective places, perfectly satisfied with this new mode of baptism, and that, if the child died in infancy, it would go to heaven!

WHIMSICAL MISTAKE OF A SERVANT.

FROM THE SAME.

BEING invited to dine with a gentleman near Aulderm, when I was praising the sallad, which I found extremely good, he said, smiling, "You need not be afraid, it is not dressed with castor oil." Upon enquiring what he alluded to, he told me that a gentleman and his lady, in the neighbourhood, who sometimes, as is the case in inland places where there are no resident doctors, when any of their tenants are sick, recommended an emetic, or the like, to them, and at their own expence afforded the medicine. This gentleman, having an appeal to the House of Peers, about a large estate, was at London; and, as he gained the process, and was about to return to Scotland, he bought some gallons of castor oil, to lie at his house, and be served out as occasion should require. Upon his arrival in Scotland, as was natural, all the nobility and gentry, who were acquainted with him came to dine with him, and congratulate him and the family on so many thousand pounds yearly being added to their fortune. When mostly all the genteel families for twenty miles round had paid their compliments to him in this manner, and he and his lady found leisure to hear the complaints of those sick people that applied to them, he found that some castor oil might be useful to a person that had come to consult them. Upon this, he rang the bell for John, the servant, who appearing, and being desired to bring some castor oil, replied, "It is all done."—"Done!" replied the gentleman, "do not you know there is a keg of it lately come from London?"—"Yes, but, if it please your honour, that one is done too."—"How can that be?" replied the gentleman, in a passion. "Why, sir, you have had such a round of company almost every day since it came,

and always sallad at table, that it is all gone."—"Don't you know it is castor oil I want, and that the name is written in large letters on the cask?"—"So it is," replied the servant, "but as your honour knows, it was for the CASTORS, and dressing the sallad, it is all gone."—"O, you scoundrel, now I understand you; so you have been dressing the sallad all this time with it. But harkee, John, for God's sake do not mention it." The truth is, all the company were highly pleased with the sallads, and had often spoken in their praise; and the gentleman and his family had never in their life a better summer's health, nor the people that visited him.

MATRIMONY.

THE following article was left with our printer last week, by a very pretty, genteel, young lady, who earnestly intreated that it might appear in the NIC-NAC. We trust that, by inserting it, we shall not expose ourselves to the chance of being styled procurers or go-betweens.

A CARD.

To any young man who has need of a wife:—

A lady, ag'd twenty, of innocent life,
In person genteelish, in circumstance
easy,

Would change her condition, and hopes
she may please ye.

The little acquaintance she has in this
town,

(For she might have lovers enough, if
once known,)

As it leaves her no other convenient re-
source,

Compels her to have to this method re-
course.

She ventures to say that she don't want
good breeding,

And, though a good housewife, is partial
to reading;

Can dance very well; if requested, can
sing;

And can tell twenty riddles about a GOLD
RING:

Besides many stories of Love, (the sweet
passion,)

And often regrets 'tisn't more in the
fashion.

She has but one failing—that is, she
loves news,

But that leads to knowledge, so hopes
 you'll excuse.
 Whoever this suits, ere the lady he'll see,
 He must send his Proposals, seal'd up,
 for "A. B."
 To be left with the Printer of this little
 sheet,
 And if they're approv'd of, the lady will
 treat.
 But, let no young puppy, just let loose
 from school,
 Dare to send her a letter, to make her a
 fool:
 For, though such a thing has been fre-
 quently done,
 This is no jesting matter, so none of your
 fun.

KENSINGTON,
 11 MARCH, 1823.

P. S.—Their time and their trouble will
 only be lost,
 Who letters dispatch without paying the
 post.

The Wit's Nunchion.

LINES WORKED ON A HEARTH-RUG.
 Fair one, take heed how you advance,
 Nor tempt your own undoing;
 If you're too FORWARD, fearful chance!
 A SPARK may prove your RUIN.

THE late Mr. Dibdin, in his Profes-
 sional Life, thus mentions the cele-
 brated Shuter:—"Shuter, who was
 the fiddle of every company he went
 into, had, notwithstanding, an aver-
 sion to being considered merely a buf-
 foon and a jester; for the fact is,
 Shuter uttered a great many brilliant
 things, some of them far beyond the
 comprehension of those whose so-
 ciety he frequented. He happened to
 dine in a promiscuous company, who
 were on tip-toe in expectation of
 hearing something witty from him;
 or, in their own words, that he would
 be comical. He began, in his own
 language, "to twig them," and was
 determined not to open his mouth.
 At length, the cloth having been re-
 moved, one of the company could no
 longer bear to be tantalized, and
 chuckled out, "Come, master Shu-
 ter, when do you intend to begin to
 be comical?" "Gad!" said Shuter,
 "I forgot my fool's dress; but, how-
 ever, I'll go and fetch it, if you will

be my substitute till I return." The
 man thought this very comical, and
 declared he would. Shuter then took
 his hat and cane, and went away, and
 did not return at all. Thus did these
 men, in fancying they could tune this
 fiddle, by letting down the pegs, de-
 prive themselves of the very plea-
 sure they had set their hearts on."

AN order was issued at a certain town
 in France, that no person should pass
 the barrier at night without a lantern.
 A wag, determined to baffle the munici-
 pal edict for a few nights, repaired
 to the gates, and was stopped by the
 sentinel, who demanded, "Who goes
 there?" "A friend." "Where is
 your lantern?" "I did not know a
 lantern was necessary." "Good night
 —remember the lantern!" The next
 night he went again to the same spot,
 and was challenged by the guard.
 "Who goes there?" "A friend."
 "Where is your lantern?" "Here."
 "Where is your candle?" "You
 did not say any thing about a candle."
 "Good night—remember the candle!"
 The following night the wag came
 again, and was again challenged.
 "Who goes there?" "A friend."
 "Where is your lantern?" "Here."
 "Where is your candle?" "In the
 lantern." "Where is the light?"
 "You said nothing about the light."
 "Farewell—remember the light!"
 The wit departed, and put the guard
 to no farther trouble.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The explanation respecting Nobody
 is satisfactory. Abbastanza and A Con-
 stant Reader are right: the W. was
 doubtless inserted to render the Cipher
 more obscure. J. F.'s lines shall be in-
 serted. The specimens of American
 Poetry are not forgotten. The latter's
 poem next week certainly. Communi-
 cations have been received from G. H.,
 J. Bathe, E. V., W. H. B., S. B., A.,
 Grange, E. S. C., C. S., and Rolando.
 "The Dolphin" shall have a place. So-
 lutions to the Sphinx next week.

ERRATA. Page 96, column 1, line
 33, for love read belov'd. Page 128,
 column 1, line 13, for too read to.

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THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 18.

SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



COALBROOK-DALE TAR AND COAL MINE.

THE subject of the above cut is taken from the late Mr. C. Dibdin's painting of Coalbrook Dale, which he sketched while on his Tour in England, one evening, amidst furnaces, and other tremendous objects, emitting fire and smoke. We consider it not much inferior to many foreign wonders of Nature. "There are," says Mr. Dibdin, "mines of copper, lead, and iron, in Shropshire, and many coal pits, one of which was discovered, not long ago, to contain a stratum of a bituminous quality, and indeed is the very place where it is well known tar was extracted from coal. I went in company with a gentleman into the mouth of a bricked arch-way, which reached three-hundred yards; and when we had got about thirty yards, we began to see the tar ooze from the cracks in the rock. It must be understood that from the top of the rock a pit had been sunk, which went to such an immense depth that it would

have been very expensive, and indeed almost impracticable, to work it. Finding, however, the coals of an admirable quality, it was thought worth while to form the arch-way above described at the foot of the mountain, and as near as possible to the Severn, that the coal might be drawn out in carriages, which mode of getting at them, instead of the usual way, it was thought would be so much more expeditious and convenient, as to make a saving, in a short time, equal to the expence of having formed the arch-way. In the prosecution of this scheme, the tar unexpectedly made its appearance, at first oozing as we had seen it, and afterwards pouring forth in a large body, which fairly flowed into the Severn. The discovery was made known, and the course of the tar as soon as possible diverted by means of iron pipes, which were, as far as my recollection guides me, nearly as large as those which convey the water from the New River

T

in London. Large pits were immediately dug, and immense cauldrons sunk. In these the tar was boiled, and became pitch. When I saw the place, there were three springs, one of which emitted an astonishing quantity. The first was at that time nearly dried up, and this induced the workmen to believe that the whole would one day cease, which perhaps has been the case. The tar was about the consistence of treacle, and beautifully pellucid. I have no doubt but it is the dregs of this very tar which at the distance of seven miles they extract from the coal.

It is very extraordinary that at Wolverhampton they did not at that time believe this fact, and I take the reason to be that the tar was privately contracted for. I knew a chemist at Sheffield who sold an estate to purchase large quantities of it. He assured me it had the strongest similitude of any thing he ever saw or read of, to the famous black pitch used by the Egyptians for embalming. It was remarkably free from impurity, it was as bituminous as asphaltum, and had an agreeable odour not unlike benjamin.

JANE SHORE.

BEFORE Paul's Cross, in 1483, was brought, divested of all her splendour, Jane Shore, the charitable, the merry concubine of Edward IV. and, after his death, of his favourite, the unfortunate Lord Hastings. After the loss of her protectors, she fell a victim to the malice of crook-backed Richard. He was disappointed (by her excellent defence) of convicting her of witchcraft, and confederating with her lover to destroy him. He then attacked her on the weak side of frailty. This was undeniable. He consigned her to the severity of the church: she was carried to the bishop's palace, clothed in a white sheet, with a taper in her hand, and from thence conducted to the cathedral, and the cross, before which she made a confession of her only fault. Every other virtue bloomed in this ill-fated fair with the fullest vigour. She could not resist the solicitations of a youthful monarch, the

handsomest man of his time.—On his death she was reduced to necessity, scorned by the world, and cast off by her husband, with whom she was paired in her childish years, and forced to fling herself in the arms of Hastings. "In her penance she went," says Holingshed, "in countenance and pase demure, so womanlie, that, albeit she were out of all arraie, save her kirtle 'oulie, yet went she so faire and lovelie, while the woonder of the people cast a comelie rud in her cheeks (of whiche she before had most misse), that hir great shame wan her much praise among those that were more amorous of hir bodie than curious of hir soule. And manie good folkes that hated hir living (and glad were to see sin corrected), yet pitied they more hir penance than rejoiced therein, when they considered that the Protector procured it more of a corrupt intent, than anie virtuous affection."

Rowe, in his tragedy, has adopted the fable of her being denied all sustenance, and of her perishing with hunger; but that was not the fact. She lived to a great age, but in great distress and miserable poverty; deserted even by those to whom she had, during prosperity, done the most essential services. She dragged a wretched life, even to the time of Sir Thomas More, who introduces her story in his life of Edward V. The beauty of her person is spoken of in high terms. "Proper she was, and faire; nothing in hir bodie that you would have changed; but you would have wished hir somewhat higher. Thus saie they that knew hir in hir youth.—Now is she old, leane, withered, and dried up; nothing left but rivelled skin and hard bone; and yet, being even such, whoso well advise her visage, might gesse and devise which parts how filled would make it a faire face."

J. S.

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

Julian Peveril had spent at Martindale Castle a good deal of the time which his friend had bestowed in London; and at the period to which, passing over many years, our story has arrived, as it were, per saltum, they were both

living as the Countess's guests, in the Castle of Rushin, in the venerable kingdom of Man.

The Isle of Man, in the midst of the seventeenth century, was something very different, as a place of residence, from what it is now. Men had not discovered its merit, as a place of occasional refuge from the storms of life, and the society to be there met with was of a very uniform tenor. There were no smart fellows, whom fortune had tumbled from the seat of their barouches—no plucked pigeons, or winged rooks—no disappointed speculators—no ruined miners—in short, no one worth talking to.

It was here, however, at a place where a Danish or Norwegian fastness once stood, called the Black Fort, that Julian Peveril, in defiance of repeated warnings and prohibitions, frequently sought the company of Alice Bridgenorth, who dwelt in this secluded spot, by her father's command, under the care of her respectable gouvernante Mistress Deborah.

When Alice entered the parlour where her anxious lover had long expected her, it was with a slow step, and a composed manner. Her dress was arranged with an accurate attention to form, which at once enhanced the appearance of its puritanic simplicity, and struck Julian as a bad omen; for though the time bestowed upon the toilette may, in many cases, intimate the wish to appear advantageously at such an interview, yet a ceremonious arrangement of attire is very much allied with formality, and a preconceived determination to treat a lover with cold politeness.

The sad-coloured gown—the pinched and plaited cap, which carefully obscured the profusion of long dark-brown hair—the small ruff, and the long sleeves, would have appeared to great disadvantage on a shape less graceful than Alice Bridgenorth's; but an exquisite form, though not, as yet, sufficiently rounded in the outlines to produce the perfection of female beauty, was able to sustain and give grace even to this unbecoming dress. Her countenance, fair and delicate, with eyes of hazel, and a brow of ala-

baster, had, notwithstanding, less regular beauty than her form, and might have been justly subjected to criticism.

His heart beat high as she came into the apartment, and it was almost without an attempt to speak that his profound obeisance acknowledged her entrance.

"This is a mockery master Peveril," said Alice, with an effort to speak firmly, which yet was disconcerted by a slight tremulous inflection of voice—"a mockery, and a cruel one. You come to this lone place, inhabited only by two women, too simple to command your absence—too weak to enforce it—you come, in spite of my earnest request—to the neglect of your own time—to the prejudice, I may fear, of my character—you abuse the influence you possess over the simple person to whom I am intrusted.—All this you do, and think to make it up by low reverences, and constrained courtesy! Is this honourable, or is it fair?—Is it," she added, after a moment's hesitation,—“is it kind?”

The tremulous accent fell especially on the last word she uttered, and it was spoken in a low tone of gentle reproach, which went to Julian's heart.

"If," said he, "there was a mode by which, at the peril of my life, Alice, I could shew my regard—my respect—my devoted tenderness—the danger would be dearer to me than ever was pleasure."

"You have said such things often," said Alice, "and they are such as I ought not to hear, and do not desire to hear. I have no tasks to impose on you—no enemies to be destroyed—no need or desire of protection—no wish, Heaven knows, to expose you to danger.—It is your visits here alone to which danger attaches. You have but to rule your own wilful temper—to turn your thoughts and your cares elsewhere, and I can have nothing to ask—nothing to wish for. Let me, once more, in fair terms, entreat you to absent yourself from this place—till—till—." (Continued on page 154.)

NEGRO FRENZY.

The following statement appeared in

the newspapers and magazines, in the month of February, 1759:—"A very tragical affair happened some time ago at St. Eustatia. A negro, who was at work in a ship in the harbour, having had some words with a white person, in his passion stabbed him; upon which another negro told him, that he would certainly be put to death; and that if he had killed twenty, they could do no more to him. Thereupon, the fellow, in a fit of desperation, immediately jumped overboard, and swam to shore, with a knife in his hand; and the first person he met with happened to be an English sailor, whom the villain instantly cut across the belly, so that his bowels appeared. This done, he in a moment ran into a woollen draper's shop, and stabbed a young fellow sitting behind the counter; he then ran into the street, and wounded desperately one or two others. By this time, the people were greatly alarmed; but the knife the fellow had being very large, and he so desperate, every body shunned him. The governor offered a reward to any who would take him alive, and a sailor undertook it, armed with a musket; but, if he found it impracticable, he was to shoot him.—The negro, who was then at the wharf side, alone, saw him coming, and met him with great resolution; he made an essay to stab the sailor, by giving a sudden leap upon him, but the tar avoided it, and struck at him with the butt end of his musket, and broke his arm; upon which, with great intrepidity, he got his knife into his other hand, and made another push at the sailor, but with as little success as the former; and by another blow, he was, with the assistance of some other persons who had gathered about him, secured alive. He was immediately brought to trial, and condemned; and next day hung upon a gibbet, in irons, alive, where he continued in the greatest agonies, and shrieking in the most terrible manner, for near three days. His greatest cry was, "Water! water! water!" being extreme hot weather, and the sun full upon him."

REMARKABLE JUDGMENT.

A **TURKISH** merchant had lost his

purse, which contained two hundred pieces of gold. He applied to a public crier, whom he ordered to declare, that he would give the half of the sum to the finder. It fell into the hands of a sailor, who chose rather a lawful gain, by accepting the proposed reward, than to make himself guilty of theft; for, by an article of the Alcoran, he who detains a thing lost, and cried publicly, is declared a thief. He, therefore, confessed to the crier that he had found the purse, and he offered to restore it, on receiving the half of what it contained. The merchant appeared immediately, and, though exceedingly glad to find his money, he would fain disengage himself from his promise; but, not being able so to do, without some specious pretext, he had recourse to a lie. With the two hundred pieces of gold he pretended there was in the purse a precious emerald, which he immediately asked the sailor for. The sailor took Heaven and the Prophet to witness that he had found no emerald; notwithstanding, he was brought before the Cadi, and accused of theft. Whether through injustice, or neglect of weighing the matter thoroughly, the judge discharged indeed the sailor from the crime of theft, but, reprimanding him for having lost through his fault a precious jewel, and obliged him to return the two hundred pieces of gold to the merchant, without receiving any reward. So hard a sentence, ruining all at once the hopes and the honour of the poor sailor, induced him to complain of it to the Vizir, who judged it deserving of his attention. All the parties were summoned before him. After having heard the merchant, he asked the crier what he was ordered to publish. The crier having declared ingenuously that no mention was made to him of any thing but the two hundred pieces of gold, the merchant pleaded, that, if he had not named the emerald, it was from thinking that if the purse had fallen into the hands of some person who knew not the value of the jewel, he would only be induced to think of keeping it, by learning that it bore a great price. On the other hand, the

sailor made oath, that he had found only in the purse the two hundred pieces of gold. The Vizir, at last, pronounced this sentence: "Forasmuch as the merchant has lost an emerald with two hundred pieces of gold, and the sailor swears that in the purse which he found there was no emerald, it is manifest that the purse and the gold which the sailor found are not what the merchant has lost. It must be another that has lost the purse and gold. Let the merchant, therefore, continue to have his gold and his emerald cried, till they are restored to him by some one who has the fear of God. As to the sailor, let him keep for forty days the gold he found, and if the loser does not present himself during that term, he may enjoy it as his just right."

Interesting Varieties.

BUONAPARTE

Had several attempts made upon his life—one of them, which took place soon after he was chosen Chief Consul, was attended with the following curious circumstances:—A leader of the Jacobin faction had succeeded in procuring to be made a snuff-box perfectly similar to that used by the Chief Consul, but, though the fashion of it was imitated most correctly, the artificer had not succeeded in making it open with equal facility. Buonaparte finding this box upon his table, and being inclined to take a pinch of snuff, was astonished to find a considerable difficulty in opening it. This circumstance struck him so much, that the similarity of the box, in other respects, had no effect in deceiving him. After a number of vain enquiries among his servants, he sent for a physician who, having chemically analyzed the snuff in the box, declared, that the Chief Consul, had he taken any, would not have survived half an hour.

SUPERSTITION.

There is a vulgar custom, which has long prevailed among the ignorant part of the community, particularly in Scotland, where superstition may, even now, be considered in its meri-

dian, of sowing hemp-seed on Hallow-eve; and many of our readers may remember that this custom has more than once been attended with fatal effects. Some years since, a servant-girl belonging to Mr. Matthewson, type-founder, of Edinburgh, resolved to follow this absurd practice, and notwithstanding the remonstrances of her master, went into the foundry at ten at night with a candle, which she placed on the table whilst she performed her incantations. After walking through the shop several times, and not seeing any thing, she took up her seed, and sowed it a second time, when a tall, meagre figure presented itself to her imagination. She returned, and after relating what she had seen, went to bed, placing the Bible under her head. In the morning she was seized with a stupor, originating from the deceptions of her imagination, and shortly after expired.

Burns, in his "Hallow-een," has an amusing passage relating to the ceremony of sowing hemp-seed, the mode of performing which is thus described in a note on the poem:—

"Steal out of the house unperceived, and sow a handful of hemp-seed, harrowing it with any thing you can conveniently draw after you. Repeat now and then, 'Hemp-seed, I sow thee! hemp-seed, I sow thee! and he (or her) that is to be my true-love, come after me, and pou (pull) thee!' Then look over your left shoulder, and you will see the appearance of the person invoked, in the attitude of pulling hemp."

DUELLING.

A QUARREL arising between a celebrated gentleman in the literary world, and one of his acquaintance, the latter heroically, and no less laconically, concluded a letter to the first, on the subject of their dispute, with, "I have a life at your service, if you dare to take it." To which the former replied, ending his epistle thus: "You say you have a life at my service, if I dare to take it; I must confess to you that I dare not take it; I thank my God, I have not the courage to take it. But though I own that I am afraid to

deprive you of your life, yet, sir, permit me to assure you, that I am equally thankful to the Almighty Being, for mercifully bestowing on me sufficient resolution, if attacked, to defend my own." It had the effect; it brought the madman back again to reason, friends intervened, and the affair was compromised.

THE manner of duelling in Japan is singular, and, to our European prejudices, may appear absurd and barbarous: but the philosophical observer will, perhaps, consider it as rational as an appeal to the sword or the pistol. When two men of honour quarrel in that country, the party who conceives himself injured, rips up his own entrails with a large knife, and presenting the instrument to his adversary, invites him to follow his example. No Japanese gentleman can decline such an invitation; for if he does not instantly plunge the knife into his own bowels, he is dishonoured for life.—(Davy's "Ceylon.")

LORD BYRON,

A short time before he quitted England in 1816, addressed the following lines to an individual by whom he deemed himself injured: they are but little known:—

AND, dost thou ask the reason of my sadness?

Well, I will tell it thee, unfeeling boy;
'Twas ill report that urg'd my brain to madness,

'Twas thy tongue's venom poisoned all my joy.

The sadness which thou sceest, is not sorrow;

My wounds are far too deep for simple grief:

The heart thus wither'd, seeks in vain to borrow

From calm reflection, comfort or relief.

The arrow's flown, and dearly shalt thou rue it;

No mortal hand can rid me of my pain;
My heart is pierc'd, but thou can'st not subdue it:

Revenge is left, and is not left in vain.

ON the wall of the Parthenon at Athens, beneath a variety of names, are inscribed the following lines:—

"Fair Albion, smiling, sees her son depart

To trace the birth and nursery of Art;
Noble his object, glorious is his name,
He comes to Athens, and he writes—
his name."

UNDER this, Lord Byron wrote the following Epigram, during his stay at Athens, in 1810:—

"This modest bard, like many a bard unknown,
Rhymes on our names, but wisely hides his own;
But, yet, whoe'er he be, to say no worse,
His name would sound much better than his verse."

MATRIMONY.

[The contemplated repeal of the late Marriage-Suspension-Act seems to have given a fresh stimulus to bachelors' longings after matrimony, for numberless are the communications which the article inserted under this head in our last has called forth, all of which we shall carefully forward to their destination, and faithfully report the result. In the mean time, without intending to damp those expectations of wedded bliss which the young lady doubtless indulges, we insert the following lines at the particular request of an amiable widow of our acquaintance.]

TO MISS A. B.

WHEN on these lines you turn your gaze,
You'll think, some whining lover
By means of poetry essays
His passion to discover.

No, fair one! I'm a matron grave,
Whom time and care have wasted;
Who would thy youth from sorrow save,
Which I in wedlock tasted.

In courtship we are all divine,
And vows and pray'rs pursue us,
Darts, flames, and tears, adorn our shrine,
And artfully men woo us.

But, marriage lets the vizard fall,
Then cease they to adore us:
The goddess sinks to housewife Moll,
And they reign tyrants o'er us.

Then let no man impression make
Upon thy heart so tender;
Nor play the fool, for pity's sake,
Thy freedom to surrender.

"Lead apes in hell!" there's no such
thing.

Those tales are made to fool us;
Yet there we'd better hold a string,
Than here let monkeys rule us.

HENRIETTA.

At the siege of Turin, by the French
army in 1640, a serjeant in the Pied-
montese guards gave this singular in-
stance of patriotism. He was on duty
with a few soldiers, at the under-works
of the citadel; a mine was filled, there
wanted but a saucisse, in order to
blow up several grenadier-companies,
who had rendered themselves masters
of the work, and made a lodgment
on it. The loss of this work would have
hastened the surrender of the place.
This serjeant, with resolution, ordered
the men he commanded to retreat;
enjoined them to beseech, in his name,

the king to protect his wife and chil-
dren; struck a light, set fire to the
powder, and thus perished for his
country.

TO AMELIA.

Oh! do not forget me! oh! do not for-
get!

Tho' mine eye should ne'er light on thee
more;

Oft, oft shall I think of the hour that we
met,

Of the days and delights that are o'er.

When splendor and fortune have spread
their soft wiles,

When distance hath borne thee away,
When pleasure allures, and when happi-
ness smiles,

When the world all around thee looks
gay,—

Oh! do not forget me! oh! do not for-
get!

For, alike in thy weal or thy woe,
The sun of remembrance never shall set,
It shall follow wherever you go.

ROLANDO.

THE SPHINX.

No. II.

AN ENIGMATICAL LOVE-LET- TER SENT TO A YOUNG LADY.

He	One	Me	Same
Only	Only	Unto	The
Are	But	You	For
You	Love	Say	Me
And	I	And	Requite

She	One	He	One
Only	Only	Only	Only
Are	But	Am	But
You	Loves	I	Is
And	That	And	There.

LATIN QUIBBLE.

"*Mea mater est mala sus.*"

REQUIRED.—A translation of this,
which a dutiful son may address to his
mother without offence.

QUERY.

Which is preferable, a Potatoe or
Heaven?

CHARADE,

ADDRESSED TO A LADY,

"What I do;—What I do not;—
That you are."

RIDDLES.

I.

In marble walls, as white as milk,
Lia'd with a skin as soft as silk,
Within a fountain chrystal clear,
A golden apple does appear.
No doors there are to this strong hold,
Yet thieves break in, and steal the gold,

II.

Two sisters on one day were born,
Rosy and dewy as the morn,
True as a sailor to his lass,
Yet words between them often pass.
At morn they part, but then at night
They meet again, and all is right.
What seldom you in nymphs discover,—
They're both contented with one lover.

SOLUTIONS TO ARTICLES

IN NO. I. OF THE SPHINX.

THE LOVER'S ADDRESS.—"Oh!
you have two eyes beyond comparison."

FIRST AND SECOND CHARADES,—
"Blunderbuss."

FIRST ENIGMA,—"The apparent
contradiction arises from a quibble be-

tween the verbs *ETRE* and *SUIVRE*; literally translated it runs thus:—I am what I am, but I am not what I follow; for, if I were what I follow, I should not be what I am.—i.e. a footman.

SECOND ENIGMA,—"Un souvenir cause souvent un soupir."

THIRD ENIGMA,—"The letter A."

DESCRIPTION, &c.—Supply the blanks in each line with "I, Money, Friend."

Correct Solutions to several of the above have been forwarded by S. B., A., J. W., F. B. and E. S. C. The latter gentleman thus solves the first Enigma:

Most certainly mortals are given to
BLUNDER.

And a BUSS from the fair is unwelcome
to few:

When both are united, without any wonder,

A-BLUNDERBUSS speedily rises to view.

*. The various communications we have received for the SPHINX shall be duly attended to.

The Wit's Nunchion.

A BARONET, a great amateur of the pugilistic art, had written a work to demonstrate its utility. He even taught it gratis to those who had an inclination to receive his lessons. A nobleman in the neighbourhood happening to pay him a visit, and conversing with him about wrestling, the knight laid hold of him behind, and threw him over his head. The former, a little bruised by his fall, rose in a passion. "My lord," said the baronet, gravely, "I must have a great friendship for you; you are the only one to whom I have ever shown that trick."

His Grace the Duke of Wellington, during the last Peninsular campaign, is said to have highly praised a regiment of cavalry, which he had at that moment ordered to a service of the utmost danger. "Advance, colonel," cried his lordship, "and cut off the

guns of the enemy, which are now dealing such destruction among our infantry: charge with that noble regiment, the first in the world!" "I will, general," replied the colonel, advancing; "and before the enterprize is accomplished, I have no doubt of their being the first in the NEXT!"

THE beautiful and accomplished Miss B. on being uncourteously and rudely urged to dance, by an officer in the Guards, very neatly remarked, that the ladies, as well as the country, had seriously to deplore the state of the times, which was not civil, but military!

VERRES being accused of having plundered the provinces under his administration, sent to the orator Hortensius an Ivory Sphinx, a very precious piece of sculpture. Cicero, in his pleading, having said somewhat mysterious against the conduct of Hortensius, the latter answered him, that he did not know how to explain enigmas: upon which Cicero immediately replied, "You have the Sphinx at home."

A RICH farmer of Devonshire made a will, in which the following article was found:—"I bequeath to John Wilkes, late member of Parliament for Aylesbury, five thousand pounds sterling, as a grateful return for the courage with which he defended the liberty of his country, and opposed the dangerous progress of arbitrary power."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications have been received from Alvar, S. T. F., Abbastanza, Timon, C. P., Justus, Amicus, J. P., Curiosus, H. O. and Sewell. J. S. and George protest against our "Ghost-Stories," whilst Reuben, H. S.—t, and several other correspondents call for a continuation of them. We suppose we must bow to the wishes of the majority. In future we shall seldom be without a Cut. All our deficient numbers are reprinting. Several promised articles shall appear in No. 19.

Printed and Published by T. WALLIS, Camden Town; and Sold by all Booksellers and News-men, in Town and Country. Price One Penny. Published also by Fairbairn, Bread way, Ludgate-Hill.

THE NIG-NAG;

OR,

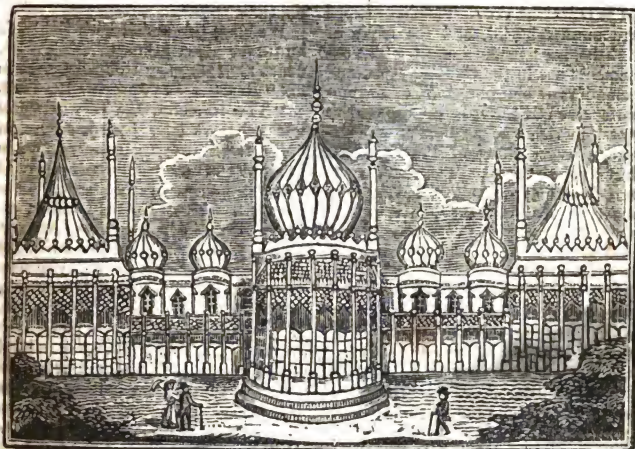
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 19.

SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



THE PALACE, AT BRIGHTON.

SOME recent Parliamentary Discussions having directed the public attention to this remarkable edifice, we have been induced to present our readers with a view of it.

The town of Brighton has long been peculiarly distinguished by marks of his majesty's favour, and on the site of the present palace he caused to be erected in 1784 a simple unostentatious building, which was called the Marine Pavilion, and inhabited by him during his occasional visits to the sea coast. It was, however, rather adapted for the pleasant retreat of a private gentleman, than for the Court of a Sovereign, and therefore plans for its extension have been gradually developing for some years past; but as it stands amongst buildings in the very heart of Brighton, where ground is particularly valuable, vast sums were unavoidably expended in procuring the necessary space, and the obstinacy of some of the proprietors of tenements rendered

the negotiations extremely protracted and tedious.

Most of these difficulties, however, having at length been overcome, the present building was commenced early in the year 1817; and though the design is not even yet completed, the appearance of the exterior is extremely grand and striking. It will be seen that the style is Oriental; and the first view of the fabric reminds the spectator of the fairy palaces of Hindostan, or the Moorish structures in Spain, particularly the Alhambra, near Granada. Through a mistaken idea that it is a copy of the Kremlin at Moscow, it is very frequently named after that edifice. The principal front, with the wings, will occupy about 200 yards: the pinnacles of the highest domes are from 90 to 100 feet high. The whole expense of the alterations, &c., it is supposed, will not fall far short of one million. The walls are brick, covered with mastic; and the

cupolas and minarets are iron. The premises altogether consist of about seven acres. The interior is thus disposed:—At the southern extremity is the Royal Banqueting Room, a magnificent apartment, 60 feet long, and 42 wide, surmounted by a dome, painted to represent a sky. The decorations are most splendid, and the mode of lighting has a magical effect. The ornaments are in the Chinese style, and some jars of blue porcelain, of the manufacture of Staffordshire, are said to excel in richness, brilliancy, and elegance, every thing of the kind that has been witnessed. The rich carpet, too, is of native produce, having been made at Axminster. The centre of the palace contains three grand drawing-rooms; and at the northern end is the Music Saloon, in which his Majesty, who is himself a very scientific performer, frequently enjoys vocal and instrumental concerts of the finest description. The decorations of these apartments are every thing that the arts of painting, gilding, carving, and sculpture, could render them by their combined efforts.

The stables attached to the Palace were built in 1805, upon a remarkably grand scale, containing superb stalls for 68 horses, within a circular area, surmounted by a dome of nearly 100 feet diameter (only 20 feet less than the span of that of St. Paul's), which forms a conspicuous object. The expense was 200,000*l*.

The residence of Royalty at Brighton has been of essential service to the town, which, fifty years ago, was a comparatively obscure and paltry place. In the second edition of "*Brookes's Gazetteer*," printed in 1766, it is thus slightly and concisely described:—"An indifferent town, ill-built, and inhabited chiefly by fishermen." It now ranks amongst the largest in the kingdom. The houses, upon an average, have increased 150 annually. In 1801, the number of residents was 7339; in 1810, it was 12012, and the recent Population Return exhibits a corresponding increase. During the height of the season, the population is sometimes doubled by the immense influx of visitors, for whose accommo-

dation between twenty and thirty stage-coaches leave and enter Brighton every day. The distance from London was formerly computed to be 56 miles, but by turning the road at various places, and making several short cuts, it has been reduced to little more than 50.

We close this article with Cobbett's burlesque description of the Palace, which that singular writer inserted in his "*Register*" of January 19, 1822.

"The Kremlin, the very name of which has so long been a subject of laughter all over the country, lies in the gorge of the valley, and amongst the old houses of the town. The grounds, which cannot, I think, exceed a couple or three acres, are surrounded by a wall neither lofty nor good-looking. Above this rise some trees, bad in sorts, stunted in growth, and dirty with smoke. As to the "*Palace*," as the Brighton newspapers call it, the apartments appear to be all upon the ground-floor; and, when you see the thing from a distance, you think you see a parcel of cradle-spits, of various dimensions, sticking up out of the mouths of so many enormous squat decanters. Take a square box, the sides of which are three feet and a half, and the height a foot and a half. Take a large Norfolk turnip, cut off the green of the leaves, leave the stalks 9 inches long, tie these round with a string 3 inches from the top, and put the turnip on the middle of the top of the box. Then take 4 turnips of half the size, treat them in the same way, and put them on the corners of the box. Then take a considerable number of bulbs of the crown-imperial, the narcissus, the hyacinth, the tulip, the crocus, and others; let the leaves of each have sprouted to about an inch, more or less according to the size of the bulb; put all these, pretty promiscuously, but pretty thickly, on the top of the box. Then stand off and look at your architecture. There! That's "*a Kremlin!*"

* MARVELLOUS TALES.

THE three following old women's stories are copied from an evening paper of the year 1805:—"A few months

previous to the decease of his grace, Francis, Duke of Bedford, he received an anonymous letter from a person who professed himself to be highly interested in his grace's welfare, containing an account of certain admonitions and warnings, which that person declared to have received in his dreams or visions, and which threatened his grace with some dreadful calamity. The letter then proceeded to point out certain epochs when that calamity was likely to happen, and recommended him not to take violent exercise, or go out of his house, but with great caution, on those days. The duke, on whose mind such circumstances were not likely to make much impression, committed the letter to the flames, and thought no more of it. After the lapse of one of the epochs mentioned in the letter, the writer sent a second to the duke, congratulating him on having passed one of the dangerous epochs, but still persisting in his belief of the importance of the warning, and expressing his hopes that his grace would watch carefully over a life so valuable as his to the nation; and again recommending great caution. The repetition of this singular admonition, added to the remarkably fine writing of the letter, rather awakened his grace's curiosity, and he gave the letter to an intimate friend, who had it in his pocket when he received the news of his grace's accident. These warnings, by the contents of the two letters, it seems, were given to the writer, with several circumstantial incidents, and at different periods; and although, as he professed, he was entirely a stranger to the duke, yet the impression made upon his mind was indelible."

THE wife of Mr. Adams, a respectable farmer at Sawston, near Cambridge, a few days ago, perceived that the bottom part of her gown was torn, as if caught by a hook: this she immediately mended, and thought no more of it; but, on the following morning, the gown appeared torn in the same place, and in several others, at which Mrs. A. not recollecting any cause, began to be much surprised, and men-

tioned the circumstance to her husband, and the maid-servant, whose gown by this time had shared the same fate. The family being now alarmed, related the strange event to their neighbours, many of whom visited the house, and soon discovered that their apparel sustained a similar injury, as well men as women. Mr. Adams had three coats, all of which were considerably torn in the skirts: the wife had, during the last four months, put on six different gowns, and all were so much torn, that she could not even mend them. A girl that resided in the house, about fifteen years of age, had literally nothing but the body part of her gown remaining, all the skirts having fallen off as she moved about. A lady, who had been a few weeks on a visit at Sawston, called at the house one day, with several other persons: she had on a new coloured gown, and after being there about a quarter of an hour, discovered two large holes and a long rent in different parts of it, and being considerably alarmed at the unaccountable affair, immediately left the house; during her stay, the apparel of several other persons was torn or rent in like manner. This very extraordinary occurrence became the subject of discourse all over Cambridge, and we have no doubt half the town went to Sawston to witness its strange operations.

A SINGULAR circumstance occurred, a few evenings ago, in Mount-street watch-house. A stone mason's labourer, in South Mews, being detected, on leaving the yard, at one o'clock, with a quantity of broken saws, and other iron, in his apron, stolen property, was given in charge to a constable, and conveyed to the watch-house in Mount-street, Grosvenor square. After a long investigation, he was ordered under the care of Mr. Peddington, the watch-house keeper. While the latter was at tea, in the afternoon, with his wife and family, and a servant maid, he started in a rage, and swore d—n his eyes, he thought he saw the prisoner hang himself—took out a long clasp-knife from his pocket, opened

it, took the key of the cell in his right hand, and approached the dungeon. To his utter astonishment, on entering, he found the culprit suspended from the beam of the dungeon, by his neck-handkerchief and an old apron. When cut down, he was apparently dead; but being dragged into the kitchen, and placed in a chair by the fire, he fell into convulsions, and, recovering, said, "the devil was coming for him and the watch-house-keeper;" and added, "particularly for you (pointing to Peddingstone), who robbed my master this night of his due, by cutting me down so soon." This, with other frantic expressions, so frightened the watch-house-keeper, that he viewed, with fear and astonishment, the convulsed situation of the prisoner, when, all on a sudden, his wife, his maid, and himself, were disturbed by a sudden unexpected noise, which rattled the china plates, chairs, tables, and other moveable articles in the room. At this instant the prisoner jumped from his chair, extended his arms, and halloed out, "Devil, devil, O devil! cease, quiet, quiet, quiet!" then rushing at the watch-house-keeper, he so terribly alarmed him, that the latter immediately fell into a fit, and so continued, till two o'clock on Thursday morning, when he expired in great agonies. The servant maid lies in a melancholy state, without hopes of recovery.

PORTER.

As many people in London drink, on an average, a quart of porter daily, or about 100 gallons per annum, they may, perhaps, have no objection to be informed of the ingredients employed in producing the liquor they imbibe so plentifully. They are as follow:—
 "To produce five barrels of porter, add to eight bushels of malt the needful quantity of water; mash it twice; add, in the boiling, from eight to twelve lbs. of hops, six lbs. of treacle, eight lbs. of liquorice root, sixteen lbs. of moist sugar, half an ounce of capsicum, two ounces of Spanish liquorice, one ounce of lint-seed, a quarter of an ounce of cinnamon, and a quarter of an ounce of headin when

cool, add from one to two gallons of yeast; after it has got a good head, cleanse it with three ounces of ginger and one ounce of *Coculus Indicus*, then barrel it, and finish the working. Fine it with blinglass or hartshorn shavings."

This receipt is copied from the "Supplement to the Pharmacopœia," by Mr. Gray, who adds the following observations upon the subject, and upon beer in general:—

"The public brewers consider that six pounds of sugar are equal in strength, and that one pound of coriander seed is equal in intoxicating quality, to a bushel of malt. The sugar is employed to colour the beer, instead of brown malt; the other substances are merely to flavour the liquor, and may be varied at pleasure. The desire of evading the duty on malt has given rise to the discovery, that one-third only of the barley employed in making beer need be made into malt, as this portion will convert the remainder to its own nature during the process of brewing. Capsicum and grains of paradise are used to give a pungent taste to weak beer; but to prevent detection, concentrated tinctures of these articles are generally employed. Besides these, ginger, coriander seed, and orange-peel, are used to flavour it; while opium, *Coculus Indicus*, nux vomica, tobacco, and extract of poppies, are added to heighten the intoxicating quality. Quassia is substituted for hops, but the beer made with it soon grows muddy, unless kept very cool. Mild or new beer is made to taste like stale by adding a little oil of vitrol or alum, while, on the other hand, stale or sourish beer is made to resemble mild, by powdered oyster-shells or chalk. When porter is reduced by mixing it with table beer, publicans usually add molasses, to enable it to form a head, and extract of gentian, to keep up the flavour."

We cannot quit this subject without one brief observation. At the present price of malt, every man who has a copper, may brew excellent ale at three-pence a quart; and even supposing one tenth part only of the above

statement to be correct, is it not madness to continue dependent upon publicans for such poisonous beverage, while he may fill his cellar with strong, cleanly, wholesome, invigorating liquor, at about half the price of porter. Many people are deterred from the practice of private brewing by mistaken ideas of the trouble it occasions, and of the expense of the necessary utensils; but a little enquiry into the matter will convince them that the statements they have heard on these points are imaginary, or exaggerated, and originate with those who are deeply interested in discouraging the practice of private brewing. No man, however, who has once enjoyed the luxury of home-brewed beer, will consent to return to the filthy compositions vended at ale houses.

Interesting Varieties.

SONG

FROM "THEATRICAL PORTRAITS,
AND OTHER POEMS," BY H. S.
VAN DYK.

THERE'S a magic in thine eye, Love,
Which seems a soul of light;
There's a music in thy sigh, Love,
More sweet than lutes at night.
Oh! thy ev'ry word's a song, Love,
Thy ev'ry breath's a rose,
For they steal thy lips along, Love,
And scent them as they close.

I shall ne'er forget the day, Love,
When first I heard thee sing!
Oh! 'twas like the young bird's lay, Love,
That wakes the infant Spring.
For the murmur from thy lips, Love,
Came faintly sweet to me,
As the sound of oar that dips, Love,
At moonlight in the sea.

ELEVATED WARFARE.

A singular species of duel took place in Paris, in 1809.—M. Granpre and M. Le Pigne having quarrelled about a celebrated Opera dancer, who was kept by the former, but had been discovered in an intrigue with the latter, a challenge ensued. Being both men of elevated minds, they agreed to fight in balloons, and in order to give time for preparation, it was determined that the duel should take place on

that day month. Accordingly, on the 3d of May the parties met, in a field adjoining the Thulleries, where their respective balloons were ready to receive them. Each, attended by his second, ascended his car, armed with a blunderbuss, as pistols could not be expected to be efficient in their probable situations. A multitude attended, hearing of the balloons, but little dreaming of the purpose; the Parisians merely looked for the novelty of a balloon race. At nine o'clock the cords were cut, and the balloons ascended majestically, amidst the shouts of the spectators. The wind was moderate, blowing from the north north-west, and they kept, as far as could be judged, within eighty yards of each other. When they had mounted to the height of about nine hundred yards, M. Le Pigne fired his piece ineffectually; almost immediately after, the fire was returned by M. Granpre, and penetrated his adversary's balloon; the consequence of which was its rapid descent, and M. Le Pigne and his second were both dashed to pieces on a house-top over which the balloon fell. The victorious Granpre then mounted aloft in the grandest style, and descended safe, with his second, about seven leagues from the spot of ascension.

THE ROBBER.

IN the year 1747, a man was broken on the wheel at Orleans, for a highway robbery, and when the executioner concluded he was dead, he was given to a surgeon, who had him carried to his dissecting-room, as a subject to lecture upon. The thighs, legs, and arms, of the unhappy wretch had been broken; yet, on the surgeon's proceeding to examine him, he found him still alive, and by the application of proper cordials, he was soon rendered sensible.

The surgeon and his pupils, moved by his sufferings and solicitations, determined to attempt his cure, but he was so mangled, that they were compelled to amputate one of his arms and both of his thighs. Notwithstanding this mutilation, and the great loss of blood consequent upon it, he

survived, and when perfectly recovered, the surgeon, at his request, had him conveyed by night, in a cart, fifty leagues from Orleans, to a retired part of the country, where, as he said, he intended to get his living by begging.

He took a situation by the roadside, close to a wood; and his deplorable condition excited the compassion of all who saw him. In his youth he had served in the army; and he now passed himself off for a soldier, who had lost his limbs by a cannon-shot.

He had pursued this occupation for some years, when one day, a drover, returning from market, was solicited by him for charity; and being moved at his appearance, threw him a small piece of coin. "Alas!" said the beggar, "I cannot reach it; you see I have neither arms nor legs (for he had concealed behind his back the arm which had been preserved); so, for the sake of heaven, put your kind donation into my pouch."

The drover approached, to comply with his request; but, as he stooped to raise the money, the sun shining brightly, he saw a shadow on the ground, which caused him to start, and look up; when he perceived the arm of the beggar elevated over his head, with a short iron bar grasped in his hand. He evaded the meditated blow, and seizing the impostor, dragged him to his cart, threw him in, drove off to the nearest town, and took his prisoner before a magistrate.

On searching him, a whistle was found in his pocket, which naturally excited a suspicion that he had accomplices in the wood; the magistrate, therefore, instantly ordered a guard to proceed to the place, where he had been seized, and they arrived within half an hour after the murder had been attempted.

The guard having concealed themselves behind different trees, the whistle was blown, the sound of which was remarkably shrill and loud, and was answered by another from underground, three men at the same instant issuing from a clump of brambles and shrubs. The soldiers fired on them, and they fell. The bushes were then examined, and the entrance

to a cave discovered, where were found three young girls and a boy. The girls were kept for the offices of servants and the purposes of lust; the boy, scarcely twelve years old, was son to one of the robbers. The girls, in giving evidence, deposed that they had lived three years in the cave; that they had been kept there by force, from the time of their seizure; that dead bodies were frequently brought in to the place, stripped and buried; and that the old soldier was carried out every day, and sat by the road-side three or four hours.

On this evidence the murderous mendicant was a second time condemned to suffer on the wheel. As but one arm remained, it was broken by several strokes in several places; and the coup de grace being denied, he lived in tortures nearly five days. When dead, his body was burnt to ashes, and strewed to the winds.

CHIMNEY.—A friend of ours hearing it asserted that no word would rhyme with Chimney, produced the following refutation of the remark:—

He who the height would gain of rhyming fame,
And to posterity transmit his name,
Fearless must scorn the rigid critics' rules,
And disregard the dictates of the schools;
Whate'er the subject be which he records,
Let concord sounds arise—ne'er mind the words.

EXAMPLE.

A house there once was which indeed
had a chimney,
It contain'd an old man, but none dar'd
come him nigh;
For gout and the palsey had seiz'd his
left limb knee,
And right foot, besides, which kept him
to the chimney,
Yet, though sourly inclin'd, oft would
chaunt a hymn he,
While he lay thus confin'd inside of his
chimney.

MATRIMONY.

[WE must positively decline allowing the NIC-NAC to be made the medium of any more negotiations upon this very serious subject, for since we were so imprudent as to insert Miss A. B's.

"Card" in No. 17, the postman has been knocking incessantly at our door, to the infinite detriment of our knocker, and the utter disturbance of our domestic economy. Once for all then, we beg our readers to settle such matters without our interference. The numerous letters we received addressed to A. B. were all duly delivered, and the most approved candidate (whose letter we subjoin) is, we understand, a substantial tradesman of Tottenham-Court Road, verging upon fifty years of age. He was seen on the evening of Good Friday, escorting the young lady round the Regent's Park in a very gallant manner.

To the unsuccessful candidates, we are requested to present the young lady's thanks for their kind wishes and very flattering attention, especially to C. D. and Clio. "Had the charms of poetry," she says, "been allowed to determine my choice, I could not have hesitated a moment to prefer the latter gentleman."]

TO MISS A. B.

My dear Miss A. B. I'm in want of a wife,
And if you are young, and of innocent life,
I shall like you the better for that;
But then, my dear creature, I wish for your name,
And if we don't bargain, 'twill sure be no blame
To indulge in a little chit-chat.

I'm steady and sober, nay grave, I may say,
For I work until night, from the dawning of day,
And much want a good housewife like you;
With "dancing and singing" I'll freely dispense,
My shop you must mind, and display your good sense,
By not acting the part of a shrew.

I'm no beardless youngster, believe what I say,
So hope, if you're wedded, you'll strive to obey,
And act like a woman discreet,
If your temper is mild, and you've cash at command,

I beg you'll not trifle, but give me your hand,
And our bliss will be quickly complete.

The Wit's Nunchion.

LORD MOLESWORTH, who had been at Copenhagen, as envoy from England, published a work on Denmark, having for title, "Account of Denmark." The king of Denmark was offended at some of the author's reflections, and ordered his envoy to make complaints against it to William III. king of England. "What will you have me to do?" said William. "Sire," answered the Danish minister, "were you to complain to the king, my master, of a similar offence, he would send you the author's head."—"This is what I neither will nor can do," replied the king; "but, if you wish it, the author shall put in the next edition of his work what you have just told me."

A BISHOP had a sideboard set out with several silver-vases, master pieces of art. As these riches were admired, the prelate, in order to excuse himself in some manner, said, he had purchased them in order to assist with them the poor of his diocese, when the opportunity should occur. "Your grace," replied somebody malignantly, "might have saved them the workmanship."

WEDLOCK.—It was an observation of Sir John, the father of Sir Thomas Moore, "that the choice of a wife is like putting one's hand into a bag full of snakes, with only one eel in it; we may by a possibility light on the eel, but it is a hundred to one we are stung by a snake." From the circumstance of his having put his own hand into the bag three times, it is to be inferred that he was more fortunate than wife-hunters in general.

LACONICISM.—During the preparations to resist the threatened French invasion in 1804, a noble Earl in Kent, on receiving the colours for his corps from the hand of his Countess, went

into the contrary extreme from the overstrained solemnities which were generally observed on such occasions. Marching at the head of a detachment of grenadiers to a bow window, from which they were to be presented, he called out, "Bess! give us our colours!" on which her ladyship threw up the window, and presented them, with the following terse reply:—"There are your colours, my lord! and God send that you may defend them like true soldiers!"

THE HARE.—A sportsman, coursing, lost a hare, and hastily accosted a shepherd boy, "Boy, did you see a hare run by here?"—"A hare, sir?"—"Yes, fool."—"What, a hare, sir?"—"Yes."—"What, a thing that runs fast, with long ears?"—"Yes."—"That go loppety, loppety lop?"—"Yes, yes, my good fellow."—"What, very long ears?"—"Yes, dolt."—"Ah, then," said the boy, "I didn't see it."

AFFAIR OF HONOUR.—Two hairdressers having quarrelled in a public house, retired to the fields, to fight it out. The one was a tall lank man; the other short, thick, and plethoric. After a few rounds, the combatant whose rotundity unfitted him for works of lasting prowess, just found breath sufficient, to whisper forth, "I'll fight no more."—The other, anxiously catching the half-formed sounds, asked, "What does he say?"—"Say," cried one of the seconds, "why he says he'll fight another hour."—"The devil he does," returned the other, "then I'll fight no longer." Fatty was accordingly declared victor, and carried from the field in triumph.

BIBLICAL COMMENT.—Job was certainly an Irishman, for he talks of one "who stripped the naked of their clothing."—Chap. 22

NEGRO DISCIPLINE.—During the

American war, the Experiment of 50 guns, was carried through that dangerous passage called Hell Gates, by a black pilot, to the great surprise of Lord Howe, who thought the ship had dropped from the clouds.—At the moment of the greatest danger, Sir James Wallace, the captain, gave some orders upon the quarter deck, which the black pilot conceived to be an infringement of his privilege; he therefore calmly tapped Sir James on the shoulder, and said, "Massa, you no speak here." The captain felt the force of Mungo's observation, and, to the astonishment of those acquainted with the danger of navigating through Hell Gates, the ship was taken safe to Sandy Hook. The addition of the Experiment to Lord Howe's little fleet, was such a reinforcement at that crisis, that his lordship rewarded the pilot with a pension of 50*l*.

ECONOMY.—A publican at Horsham, after huffing a servant boy for attempting to light a candle by thrusting it into the fire, caught it out of the lad's hand, and at the same time took a piece of paper from his waistcoat pocket, lit the candle with it, and threw the remainder into the grate, where it was instantly consumed. When Boniface's warmth was a little abated, he found the piece of paper he had made use of to save his candle's end was a ten pound Bank-note.

ORTHOGRAPHY.—The following is a literal copy of a letter sent to a medical gentleman not far distant from Blackburn:—*Cer—Yole oblige me uf yole kom un'ce me; I hev a Bad kowd; am Hill in my Bow Hills, and hev lost my Happy Tigh.*

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Lines by C. B., Epitaphs and Anecdotes, by T. H., German Curiosities, by H. B. S., and Enigmas, by J. E. W. have been received. Also Communications from Juba, T. R., and Viola.—The commencement of "Poetry and Poets," shall be given in an early number.

Printed and Published by T. WALLIS, Camden Town.—Sold by CHAPPELL & SON, Royal Exchange; FAIRBURN, Broadway, Ludgate Hill; HARRIS, Bow Street, Covent Garden, and all Booksellers, in Town & Country.—Price 1*d*.

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

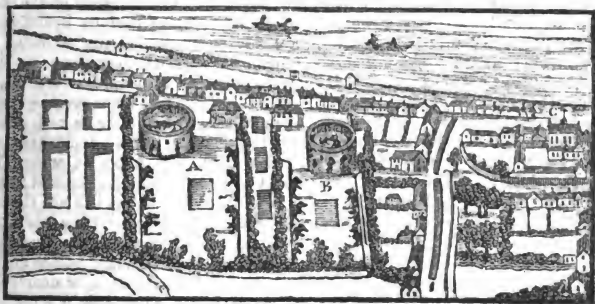
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 20.

SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKSPEARE.



HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE.

SECTION I.—The above cut is the first of a series intended to illustrate the rise and progress of the English Theatre, a subject which every one must feel interested in who admires the literature of his country, and considers that a flourishing Drama is one of the surest marks of a nation's advance in civilization and refinement. In order to render our notices complete, and afford the reader clear ideas upon the matter, it will be necessary to carry back our researches to a somewhat remote period; and to preface our remarks with some local details respecting the sites of our early Theatres, and a few words on the state of the English Stage in the 16th century.

The Drama, before the time of Shakspeare, was so little cultivated in England, that it is unnecessary to carry our enquiries much higher. In fact, there are not more than 30 or 40 plays extant which were composed previous to his commencing dramatic writer, scarcely half-a-dozen of which will bear a second perusal. Those readers, however, who are desirous of seeing some specimens of these performances, are referred to "Hawkins's English Drama," and "Dodsley's Old Plays."

Our first dramas, which were either allegorical, or founded upon passages of Scripture, were called *Mysteries* or *Moralities*, and were represented in or near churches by persons connected with the Ecclesiastical establishment. At an early period, however, there were regular performers, who lived by their profession, though it is not very easy to determine when it became common and established; but at the commencement of Elizabeth's reign, the London players began to perform in temporary theatres or scaffolds, erected in the yards of inns, such as the Cross Keys in Gracechurch Street, the Bull in Bishopsgate Street, and the Belle Sauvage on Ludgate Hill. The form of these rude play-houses appears to be retained in our modern theatres; the galleries or boxes are ranged over each other on three sides of the building, the yard bears a sufficient resemblance to the pit, and we may presume that the stage was raised in this area on the fourth side: thus, in fine weather, a playhouse not incommodious might have been formed. The fanatical spirit of the time took alarm at these abominations; and we learn from a pamphlet published in the 17th century, that "some pious magistrates

made humble suit to Queen Elizabeth, and obtained leave to thrust the players out of the City, and pull down all the playhouses within their Liberties; which was accordingly done.

At this period, the Bankside, Southwark, afterwards the site of several Theatres, particularly of the Globe, where most of Shakspeare's plays were produced, was a thinly-built district, the resort of the idle and the dissipated, who repaired thither to indulge in the amusements of Bull-baiting, Bear-baiting, and various other sports which were there carried on, particularly in the space between St. Mary Overy's (now St. Saviour's) Church and Paris Garden, a hamlet nearly opposite Blackfriars, whence there was a ferry across the Thames. Skelton, a poet of the time of Henry VIII. has the following curious lines upon these diversions:—

"What follie is this, to keep with danger,
A great mastive dog and fowle ouglie
bear!

And to this end, to see them two fight,
With terrible tearings, a ful ouglie sight.
And yet methinkes, those men are most
fools of al,

Whose store of money is but very smal,
And yet, every SUNDAY, they wil surely
spend

One penny or two, the bear-ward's living
to mend.

"At Paris Garden, each SUNDAY, a
man shal not fail

To find two or three hundred, for the
bear-ward's vail;

One HALFPENNY apiece they use for to
give,

When some have no more in their
purses, I believe.

Wel, at the last day their conscience will
declare

That the poor ought to have all they may
have to spare;

If you, therefore, it give to see a bear
fight,

Be sure God his curse upon you wil
light."

The curious cut prefixed to this article, representing the scene of these sports, has been copied with scrupulous accuracy from the earliest plan of London in existence (prefixed to "Civitates Orbis,") published in 1572,

but supposed to have been executed about 1560.* In this Map, the building marked A is styled the "Bull-Baiting," and that marked B the "Bear-Baiting." On closely inspecting the cut, it will be seen that combats are, somewhat indistinctly, represented as taking place in the interior of the edifices, while some curious bystanders outside are endeavouring to catch a view, through the openings in the walls, of what is going forward within. The bulls and bears are displayed below, ranged opposite to each other in rows. The square inclosures betwixt them, are pools of water, in which the animals were washed; and the oblong slips to the left are the old Pike Ponds:—Pye or Pike Gardens still exist. The building on the right, marked C is the ancient palace of the Bishops of Winchester, now nearly destroyed. The road leading from the Southwark Bridge, on the Surrey side of the Thames, exactly intersects the sites of the two Amphitheatres dedicated to Bear and Bull-baiting.

We shall resume this subject in our 22d number, and continue it at intervals, till we have brought into one point of view all the information that has been collected by the various writers upon it, illustrated by cuts of many Ancient Theatres, together with every one of those now in existence. We flatter ourselves that we shall hereby greatly augment the value and interest of our work.

PEVERIL OF THE PEAR.

(Resumed from page 139.)

ALICE paused, and Julian eagerly exclaimed, "Till when—till when?"

"Till you can think of me only as a sister."

"Alice," replied Julian, "this is mockery: did you not promise that if our parents could be brought to consent to our union, you would no longer oppose my suit?"

"No—no—no!" said Alice, blushing deeply; "it was your wild imagi-

* Because old St. Paul's is represented with the spire, which was burned by lightning in 1561, and never rebuilt.

nation which put such a construction on my silence. I say nothing of what I might do in a state of things which perhaps may never exist."

"Then, by heaven," exclaimed Peveril, "I will watch Major Bridgenorth's arrival in the island, and ere he has locked thee in his arms, he shall answer me on the subject of my suit."

"Then demand that answer now," said a voice, and Bridgenorth entered the apartment. Alice, with her eyes fixed on the ground, slowly retired. A long and earnest conference ensued between Julian and the Major, in which the latter shewed himself not disinclined to favour Julian's passion; but darkly hinted at some political services he should expect as a return for the boon of his daughter's hand. The remainder of the day was passed by Julian in the society of Alice and Bridgenorth, till the deepening shades of evening reminded him that he must return to the castle.

Here he found all in agitation. During his absence the Countess had received dispatches which had determined her upon removing her family to a stronger fortress, eight miles across the island; and a messenger presently intimated to Julian that she was desirous of seeing him. On entering the Countess's apartment, he found her with writing implements and many sealed letters before her; she received him with kindness, and having requested him to be seated, she said, "Julian, I have a piece of service to require of you, not perhaps entirely safe to yourself, but which no other person is so well able to perform."

"You have a thousand rights to command me, my good and noble lady," answered Peveril.

"My advices from England," continued the Countess, "state that a plot, real or fictitious, has been detected among the Catholics, and all of the Romish persuasion are in danger of being implicated, through the blind fury of the times. It is, therefore, highly desirable that I should communicate with my friends in England, and endeavour to avert the threatened danger."

"Let me go then, madam," said Peveril. "I will act for the best, and trust soon to send you information that the delusion has passed away. I am ready to depart at half an hour's notice."

"This night then," resumed the Countess, "I will arrange the means of carrying your generous project into effect. You propose, doubtless, to pass through Derbyshire, and visit Martindale Castle?"

"Certainly, madam," replied Peveril, "if time and circumstances permit."

"Of that," said the Countess, "you must yourself judge. Go, then, my dear friend, and prepare for your journey."

Julian's preparations were soon complete. He but exchanged his dress for one more suited to travelling, put a change or two of linen into a cloak-bag, and provided himself with arms; he then wrote an affectionate farewell to Alice, and two hours after midnight proceeded to a well-manned boat, provided by order of the Countess, which awaited his arrival below the castle walls. A quarter of an hour's rowing brought them to a sloop which lay at some distance, the sails were hoisted, and they immediately got under way; but, owing to contrary winds, it was the morning of the third day ere Julian was landed upon the quay of Liverpool. (Continued on page 162.)

THE ISTHMUS OF DARIEN.

THIS celebrated isthmus, in the narrowest part, is not more than 60 miles across, insomuch that, from the mountains, on a clear day, the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans may be plainly discerned at the same time, and seemingly at a very trifling distance. There have been speculatists who have maintained the practicability of joining these two immense oceans, for the purposes of navigation, by digging through this isthmus, but a careful survey has shewn that to accomplish so vast an undertaking is beyond the power of man. The mountains do not run east and west, with

long deep valleys between them, which might afford beds for canals, but, on the contrary, north and south, or nearly so; consequently, a canal must be dug through immense mountains, consisting chiefly of solid rock, which would baffle the united efforts of the universe. The junction of the two oceans might, however, be effected in a more easy though somewhat less direct manner. Ten leagues to the North of Darien is the large lake Nicaragua, which has already an opening, by the navigable river St. Juan, into the Gulf of Mexico, while on the other side a small river falls into the Western Ocean. Were the channel of the last-mentioned stream sufficiently enlarged, the long-desired passage would be gained at once. The space necessary to be cut, does not exceed, by the latest and best computations, more than 10 or 12 English miles, while the lake would afford the inestimable advantage of a large internal port. Perhaps, however, an attempt of this kind, must be left to the enterprise and ingenuity of other ages. The nations of the world are at present too much divided, and the population of America is too inconsiderable, to undertake such a matter. When that country becomes more thickly peopled, and, as her immensely superior natural advantages render probable, gives law to Europe, mankind will perhaps witness changes and revolutions in the works of Nature, which we of the present age are apt to suppose only Nature herself can accomplish.

AMERICAN SLAVERY.

THE following horrible relation is extracted from a work called "Letters of an American Farmer," 1787:—

"I was not long since invited to dine with a planter who lived three miles from —, where I then resided. To avoid the heat of the sun, I struck into a sheltered path, leading through a pleasant wood, and was leisurely travelling along, examining some plants which I had collected, when I heard a deep rough voice utter a few inarticulate monosyllables. Surprised at this, I looked around, and perceived, at about six rods distance, a cage sus-

pended to the limb of a tree, all the branches of which were covered with birds of prey, fluttering about, and contending for a place upon the cage. By an involuntary movement, rather than any mental impulse, I fired at them, and they flew away, with a hideous noise, when, horrible to repeat, I perceived a negro suspended in the cage, and in that situation left to expire. I shudder when I recollect the miserable object be presented to my view; the birds had already picked out his eyes; his cheek bones were bare; his arms had been attacked in several places, and his body was covered with a multitude of wounds. From the edges of the hollow sockets of his eyes, and from the various lacerations, the blood slowly oozed, and tinged the ground beneath. No sooner were the birds gone, than swarms of flies covered the unfortunate wretch, eager to feed on his mangled flesh. I stood motionless, contemplating this living spectre, who still retained the power of hearing, and judging from the report of my gun that some one was near, begged me in his uncouth dialect to give him some water to allay his thirst. Trembling, I sought to relieve him as well as I could, and seeing a shell lying near, fixed to a pole, which had been used by the negroes for the same purpose, I filled it with water, and guided it to his quivering lips. Instinctively guessing at its approach by the noise it made in passing through the bars of the cage, he eagerly protruded his lips, and imbibed the moisture. "Tanki you, tanki you," exclaimed he. "How long have you been hanging there?" I asked him. "Two days, and me no die; the birds, the birds! aah me!" Oppressed with the reflections excited by this dreadful spectacle, I mustered strength enough to leave the spot, though had my gun been provided with a ball, I certainly should first have put an end to his agonizing torture. When I reached my friend's house, I heard the reason of this punishment; they told me that the slave had killed the overseer of the plantation, and that such severities were absolutely necessary; adding the arguments usually

employed to justify the system of slavery, with a repetition of which I shall not weary the reader."

as it was taken from the original one, made of iron, at Newcastle-under-Lyme.

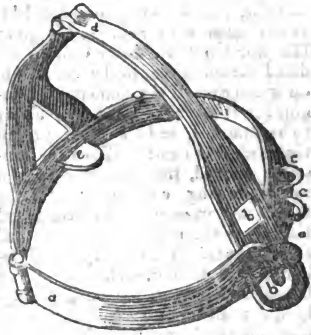
THE SCOLDS' BRIDLE.

VARIOUS methods have at various times and places been resorted to, to govern that unruly member, an angry woman's tongue. The cucking or ducking-stool is the most common of these, and our readers have doubtless heard of many similar contrivances; but such violent means we imagine can only aggravate the evil they are intended to cure. After all, we believe, the simple plan recommended by the poet for keeping a wife in order, will be found by far the most efficacious, as well as the most easy of application:—

"Be to her faults a little blind;
"Be to her virtues very kind;
"Let all her ways be unconfin'd;
"And clap your padlock on her mind."

It is, however, amusing to observe the numerous contrivances to tame scolds by corporeal punishment, resorted to by husbands who have had little faith in such mild applications as the above; and among these few are more curious than one which Dr. Plott, in his "History of Staffordshire," 1686, tells us was then made use of at Newcastle-under-Lyme, in that county, and of which he has given an engraving, with the following description:—

"They have a peculiar artifice at New-Castle and Walsall, for correcting of scolds, which it does, too, so effectually, and so very safely, that I look upon it as much to be prefer'd to the Cucking-Stool, which not only endangers the health of the party, but also gives the tongue liberty 'twixt every dipp, to neither of which this is at all lyable, it being such a bridle for the tongue, as not only quite deprives them of speech, but brings shame for the transgression, and humility thereupon, before it is taken off. Which being an instrument scarce heard of, much less seen, I here present it to the reader's view,



The letter A shows the joyned collar that comes round the neck. B and C are loops and staples, to let it out, or take it in, according to the bigness of the neck. D is a joyned semicircle, that goes over the head, made forked at one end, to let the nose through; and E is a plate of iron, that is put into the mouth, and keeps down the tongue. This bridle being put upon an offender, by order of the magistrate, and fastened behind with a padlock, she is led round the towne by an officer, to her shame, nor is it taken off till the party begins to shew all external signes imaginable of humiliation and amendment."

So far Doctor Plott. A late Cornish topographer gives us the following account of a method to reform scolds, formerly practised in that part of the kingdom:—

"Adjoining the stairs of the Guild-hall, at West Looe; are the remains of a cage for scolding women; but to the credit of the sex, it has not been used of late. East Looe had a similar cage within a few years since. The only instance recollected by the present generation of its having been used, is the following:—Hannah White and Bessy Niles, two women of fluent tongues, having exerted their oratory on each other, at last thought it prudent to leave the matter in dispute to the decision of the

Mayor. Away they posted to his worship, but the first who arrived had scarcely begun her tale, when in bounced the other, to begin her's likewise, and abuse recommenced between them with redoubled vigour. His worship (Mr. John Chubb) ordered the constables to be called, upon which each of the combatants imagined that her antagonist was about to be punished, and the event proved that each was right. When the constable arrived, the Mayor gave him the following command; 'Take these two women to the cage, and there keep them till they have settled their dispute.' They were immediately conveyed thither, and, after a few hours' confinement, becoming perfectly quiet and inoffensive, they were then liberated, to beg Mr. Mayor's pardon. These cages, however, are by no means common for there is no account of any except in the above-mentioned two towns."

Interesting Varieties.

NEWSPAPERS.

SIR,—In illustration of your article upon this subject, at p. 118, please to print the following statement of the number sold of a few principal London Papers during the year 1821, transcribed from the return laid before Parliament, upon the motion of Lord J. Russell.

TRAGACANTH.

DAILY PAPERS

Times, and Evening Mail . . .	2,684,000
Morning Chronicle	990,000
Morning Herald	875,000
New Times	846,000
Morning Post	630,500
Courier	1,594,500
Star	410,073
Sun	170,000

WEEKLY PAPERS.

Observer	714,000
News	700,000
Bell's Messenger	522,700
John Bull	468,000
Examiner	141,900

TO THE HUMMING BIRD.

Oh! fly, lovely bird, to some Fairy-land bower;

For Nature has form'd thee so brilliant and light.

The zephyrs might deem thee a beautiful flower,

Were it not for soft murmurs betraying thy flight;

Thou sippest the tears of the morn, with a sigh,

And thy home is the land of the winterless sky.

Oh! fly, glitt'ring gem, to a shelter of bliss,

In some bright summer island, where man is unknown;

Where Flora will welcome thy flight with a kiss,

And her dew-distilled nectar shall all be thy own:

While the balm-breathing blossoms their beauties unfold,

Round thy plumage of gems, intermingled with gold.

ABBASTANZA.

TO AN INFANT, EXPIRING THE SECOND DAY AFTER ITS BIRTH. WRITTEN BY ITS MOTHER.

TENDER softness, infant mild,
Perfect, purest, sweetest child,
Brightest angel, beauteous clay,
Transient lustre of a day,
Ere the last convulsive start
Tears thee from a mother's heart,
Ere the long-enduring swoon
Weighs thy precious eyelids down,
Oh! regard a mother's moan,
Whose pains are greater than thine own;
Ere your orbs extinguish'd be,
Bend thy trembling beams on me.

Drooping sweetness, verdant flow'r,
Blooming, withering in an hour,
Ere the iron hand of death
Grasps thy limbs, withholds thy breath,
Ere thy pulse forgets its part,
Ere cease the throbbings of thy heart,
Hear a suppliant,—let me be
Partner of thy destiny;
Let the earth which covers thee,
Form a covering too for me. J. F.

MAGAZINE GLEANINGS.

THERE are now in existence upwards of forty monthly works, with twelve or fourteen published quarterly, and about the same number weekly. No man, of course, undergoes the drudgery of reading the whole of these, for

such an undertaking would occupy him from the first day of every month, till the arrival of the last called his attention to another batch, and thus involve him in a never-ceasing round of "light reading." An hour or two, however, may be pleasantly occupied in turning over their leaves, without entering very deeply into their contents; and this being generally our own practice, we shall at the commencement of every month lay before our readers a collection of such Anecdotes, Epigrams, and Scraps of Information, as may appear to us worth culling; and thus enable them to enjoy the Spirit of the Magazines, without encountering any trouble in the search.

SHELLEY.—It was at Sarzana that Shelley ventured to sea in a bark, with which a fisherman would not have ventured to cross a stream. His body was washed ashore, and his ashes were transmitted to Rome, to be laid by those of his infant son; but, as the child had been buried in the old inclosure, where it had had been determined no more bodies should be laid, it was a matter of some difficulty to execute. However, the government allowed the child's body to be taken up, and father and son were laid together in the new inclosure.—("Blackwood.")

CASTRUCCIO, being at sea during a storm, expressed some alarm, when he was rebuked by a stupid fellow, who said that for his own part he did not value his life a farthing. "Every body," quoth Castruccio, "best knows the value of his own ware."—(Ibid.)

PUGILISM.—After Broughton's memorable defeat by Slack in 1750, four years elapsed before any battle of note occurred, till one was fought at Harleston in Norfolk, between Broughton's conqueror, Slack, and a Frenchman named Pettit. This was a singular conflict. On setting-to, the Frenchman darted at Slack, and seizing him by the throat, held him tight against the rails for half a minute, till he was black in the face and nearly choked; nor was it without much difficulty that Slack released himself

from his unpleasant situation. The next ten minutes, the Frenchman appeared like a blacksmith, hammered away at Slack, drove him about with uncommon impetuosity, and absolutely canted him twice off the stage. At length, Slack contrived to give his antagonist three desperate falls, which rendered him somewhat cautious, and it was evident that he began to dislike Slack's mode of throwing. Slack then followed the Frenchman up so closely, that he had no opportunity to run in at him again, but was compelled to stand up and fight, when Slack closed one of his eyes, and hideously disfigured his face. Shortly after, Slack put in a desperate blow under the ribs of his antagonist, which astonished him so much, that he jumped off the stage, and ran off as fast as possible.—("Annals of Sporting.")

MISS FENTON, the original Lucy Lockit of the "Beggars' Opera," who was married to the Duke of Bolton, became after her elevation so obnoxious to the lower orders about the place of her residence, that they were with difficulty prevented from dragging her out of her coffin. The cause of this extraordinary antipathy is not exactly known.—("Monthly.")

GAS AND MACHINERY.—It is pleasing to observe the triumphs of English enterprise and art, in the most distant parts of Europe. An English house has just obtained the privilege of lighting with Gas, throughout the whole Russian Empire, for the next ten years; and M. Pflug, a merchant of St. Petersburg, has ordered from England a machine, by means of which thirty ship-cables may be manufactured in a day.—("Literary Gazette.")

THE DUKE OF LEEDS, when Secretary of State, had a remarkable adventure. Going home from his office one night, he was stopped by two foot-pads, who having taken his money, demanded his watch. It was a very valuable repeater, and he had concealed it so secretly, that he ventured to deny having one, when it betrayed itself by striking. The hour was unfortunately TWELVE. He heard it, and, as he said, thought it

would never cease. He gave it up for lost, but luckily the men did not hear it, and made off with what they had obtained.—("B. Critic.")

* **THE DEVIL.**—Between Ashburne and Derby there stands a mean-looking chapel of the Established Church, called "Halter-Devil Chapel." The story told in the neighbourhood respecting its erection is no less singular than its name and appearance. A man named Brown, of bad character, having to go a journey very early, went to catch his horse, when by some means he caught the DEVIL, who broke loose, and vanished in a flash of fire! This incident had such an effect upon Brown (as well it might), that he built a chapel on the spot, and left twelve pounds for ever, secured upon property in Derbyshire, to be paid to the clergyman of Mugginton, the adjoining parish, for preaching a sermon in it on the last Sunday in every month. The following lines, allusive to this marvellous tale, are inscribed within the chapel:

"John Brown, being full of years and full of evil,

Instead of haltering his horse, he haltered the Devil!"

("Supplement—Gentleman's.")

● **BLACKBEARD.**—About a century ago this renowned pirate reigned master of the whole coast of N. America. He amassed great treasures, which, as some say, he for safety buried in the earth, and many nocturnal adventurers still sweat themselves in quest of them, though to little purpose. One day poor Blackbeard, fancying himself in perfect security, sent most of his crew ashore, to collect provisions on the banks of the Potomac. Unluckily for him, at that moment, an English ship of war arrived, and sent a well-manned barge up the river after him, under the command of a lieutenant. The enemy advanced warily, boarded him, found few on deck, and gained complete possession. The lieutenant, a brave Scotchman, wished, however, to give

Blackbeard a chance, and generously challenged him to single combat with the broad-sword. They engaged, and for some time the issue was doubtful; but at length Blackbeard received a severe stroke on the shoulder. "Hah!" cried he, "that's well struck, brother soldier."—"Weel," replied the lieutenant, "gin ye like it, ye sal ha more on't," and at the very next stroke severed the pirate's head from his shoulders. He then ordered his men to put it into a pot of boiling water, and cleanse it perfectly; and when this was done, he had the skull tipt with silver, and presented it to a friend, the keeper of a public-house, as a cup to drink punch out of, for which purpose it is in use to this day.

The Wit's Nunchion.

THE ANCIENT VESSEL.—At a party, a few evenings since, the conversation happened to turn upon the Vessel found in the channel of the Rother, when a lady observed that it might probably be the remains of Noah's Ark. J. S.

ON THE HYDE-PARK ACHILLES.
If on this pedestal we see

Our great ACHILLES and protector,
Why then the inference must be,

He whom he vanquished was a Hector. J. P.

A TRAVELLER, who dealt much in the marvellous, asserted that in Portugal there was fine sport in shooting at pigeons, which sometimes flew in such large flocks as to darken the air. "Did you kill any of them," asked his friend, "when you fired at them?" "No," said the traveller, "I did not kill any, because I fired rather too low, but I brought down about half a peck of their legs."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—E. E. G., Grange, Amicus, H. O., J. P., Letter from Woolwich, and *. We were glad to see the latter again. The English Cipher next week. Tim is right: we shall cut Peveril very short. We are much pleased with the "Voice from a Nutshell."

THE NIC-NAG;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

• No. 21.

SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 1823.

Vol. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove.
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



THE ROCKING STONES, OR MOVEABLE MOUNTAINS.

THE rocking stone, or logan, is a stone of a prodigious size, so nicely poised, that it rocks or shakes with the smallest force. Several of these stones are to be seen in Cornwall; and there is a wonderful monument of this kind near the Land's End, which bears the name of MAIN-AMBER, or the sacred stone. With these stones the ancients were not unacquainted. Pliny relates that at Harpasa, a town of Asia, there was a rock of such wonderful nature, that, if touched with the finger, it would shake, but could not be moved from its place with the whole force of the body. Ptolemy Hephestion mentions a stone of this description near the Ocean, which was agitated when struck by the stalk of the plant asphodel, or day-lily, but could not be removed by a great exertion of force. Another is cited by Apollonius Rhodius, supposed to have been raised in the time of the Argonauts, in the island Tenor, as the monument

of the two-winged sons of Boreas, slain by Hercules; and there are others in China, and in other countries.

Of the rocking stones to be found in different parts of Great Britain, some are natural, and others artificial, or placed in their position by human art. That the latter are monuments erected by the Druids cannot be doubted; but tradition has not handed down the precise purpose for which they were intended. In the parish of St. Leven, Cornwall, there is a promontory called Castle Treryn. On the western side, near the top, lies a very large stone, represented in the above view, which is so evenly poised, that a strong hand may move it from one side to the other: yet so fixed on its base, that not any lever, or other mechanical force, can remove it from its situation. It is called the LOGAN-STONE, and is at such a height from the ground as to render it incredible that it was raised to its present posi-

tion by art. There are, however, other rocking stones, so shaped and situated, that there cannot be any doubt of their having been erected by human strength. Of this kind the great QUOIT, or KARN-LE HAU, in the parish of Tywidnek, in Wales, is considered. It is 39 feet in circumference, and four feet thick at a medium, and stands on a single pedestal. In the Island of St. Agnes, Scilly, is a remarkable stone of the same kind. The under rock is 10½ feet high, and 47 in circumference. On the top is a basin hollowed out, 3 feet 11 inches in diameter at a medium, but wider at the brim, and 3 feet in depth. From the globular shape of this upper stone, it is highly probable that it was rounded by human art, and perhaps even placed on its pedestal by human strength. In Sithney parish, near Helston, in Cornwall, there once stood a famous logan, or rocking stone, commonly called MEN AMBER, that is, MEN AN BAR, or the TOP STONE. It was 11 feet by 5, and 4 high, and so nicely poised on another stone, that a little child could move it. It was much visited by travellers; but Shrub-sall, the Governor of Pendennis Castle, under Cromwell, caused it to be undermined, by dint of much labour, to the great grief of the country. There are some marks of the tool on it; and it seems probable, by its triangular shape, that it was dedicated to Mercury.

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

(Resumed from page 155.)

JULIAN'S first care was to provide himself with a horse, and having purchased one at the stables of a well-known dealer, he quitted the town, and made the best of his way to his father's castle; but, the roads of that period were so unfit for hasty travelling, that it was the second day at nightfall ere he reached an eminence, from which the site of Martindale was usually indicated through the darkness by a beacon constantly kindled at curfew-toll in a lofty tower; but it was with no ordinary feeling of anxiety that he perceived the light was not visible. Full of sad forebodings,

he spurred his steed sharply, and soon arrived before the gate of his father's castle.

A small postern served the purpose of an ordinary entrance, and to that Julian repaired. It stood open, and proceeding towards the usual sitting-apartment of the family, he heard the murmur of several voices. He threw the door open wide, and the scene displayed embodied all his evil bodings.

In front of him stood Sir Geoffrey, guarded by two ruffianly-looking men. Several persons, having their backs to Julian, sat round a table engaged in writing; and, a yard or two from her husband stood Lady Peveril, the emblem of death. She was the first to see Julian, and exclaimed, "Merciful heaven—the misery of our house is complete!"

"Villains," cried Julian, "unhand him!" and rushing on the guards with his drawn sword, compelled them to quit Sir Geoffrey, and stand on their own defence. On this one of the men seated at the table, started up, and attempted to seize the weapon of Julian, who, drawing forth a pistol, fired it at his new assailant. It failed of its full effect, but the person aimed at was stunned by the explosion, and staggering back, disclosed the features of Bridgenorth. A cry of astonishment escaped from Julian, and ere he recovered from the horror of the moment, he was seized and disarmed.

"Ye crop-eared knave," exclaimed Sir Geoffrey to Bridgenorth, "nothing less than the devil, the father of all fanatics, must have saved your brains from being blown about just now. But if I get through this business, I'll pay off all old scores between us."

"Sir Geoffrey," said Bridgenorth, "of what do you complain? I am a magistrate, and do but execute a warrant addressed to me by the first authority of the state. You are charged with being an accomplice in the Popish Plot."

"You a magistrate!" replied the knight; "your head is turned, because you have the king's pardon, and are replaced on the Bench, to persecute poor Papists."

"For God's sake, my dear husband," said Lady Peveril, "cease this wild talk, it will but incense Major Bridgenorth."

"Master Topham," said Bridgenorth to one of his party, "thus we will proceed. You shall set out for London at early day, taking with you the persons of Sir Geoffrey and Lady Peveril; whilst this youth, who must stand committed for having assaulted me in the discharge of my duty, shall remain in my custody."

Julian was but too sensible that he had no course but that of submission to superior force; but, ere he left the apartment, he kneeled down, to receive his father's blessing; he then followed Bridgenorth, who, accompanied by the two guards, led the way to his own house of Moultrassie. The hall-door was opened by a female, and Julian heard the well-known voice of Alice, in thanksgiving to God who had restored her father in safety. (Concluded on page 170)

RELICS OF ANTIQUITY.

SIR,—I am, you must know, an odd fellow, and consequently accustomed to seek for amusement in odd places. This turn of mind, led me last night to turn over some volumes, which, to common readers, would not appear likely to impart either information or amusement, viz.—the "Statutes at Large," but, I assure you, though I am no lawyer, I met with both, and in the course of my studies, noted down a few curious specimens of ancient laws, which I here transmit for your use. Writers who are engaged in illustrating the manners and language of our forefathers would do well to devote a few hours to the volumes in question:—

ALE.—When a quarter of barley is sold for two shillings, then four quarts of ale shall be sold for a penny; and so, from henceforth, the prices shall increase or decrease.—(51st Henry 3d, Statute 6)

If any alehouse-keeper shall sell less than a full quart of ale for a 1d., or of the small ale, two quarts for a 1d., he shall forfeit for every such offence, the sum of 20s.—(1st James 1. cap 9.)

ARCHERY.—All sorts of men, under the age of forty years, shall have bows and arrows, and use shooting.—(3d Henry 8, cap. 8.)

No bowyer shall sell any bow of yew to any person between the age of 8 and 14 years, above the price of twelve-pence.—(31 ditto, cap. 9)

GIPSEYS.—All persons which shall be found in company of vagabonds, calling themselves Egyptians, and so shall continue for the space of one month, shall be judged as felons, and suffer the pains of death!—(5th Eliz. cap. 20, sec. 3.)

FAIRS.—The King commandeth that from henceforth neither fairs nor markets be kept in church-yards, for the honour of the church.—(13th Edward 1st, statute 2, cap. 6.)

FORTUNE-TELLERS.—It shall be felony to declare any false prophecy.—(23d Henry 8, cap. 14.)

LIBELS.—If any person speak any false and slanderous news or tales against the Queen, he shall have both his ears cut off. And if any person shall print or set forth any book, containing any matter to the defamation of the Queen, or by prophesying, conjuration, &c. seek to know how long the Queen shall live, he shall be adjudged a felon.—(23d Eliz. cap. 2.)

WOOLLEN CAPS.—All persons above the age of seven years, shall wear upon Sabbaths and Holydays, upon their heads, a cap of wool, knit, thicked, and dressed in England, upon pain to forfeit, for every day not wearing, three shillings and four-pence.—(13th Elizabeth, cap. 19.)

FAST-DAYS.—Whosoever shall, by preaching, teaching, writing, or open speech, notify that eating of fish, or forbearing of flesh, is of any necessity for saving the soul of man, shall be punished, as spreaders of false news are and ought to be.—(5th Eliz. cap. 5, sec. 40.)

MASKS AND MUMMERS.—Mummers shall be imprisoned three months, and fined at the justices' discretion. The penalty for selling visors, or keeping them, is to forfeit 20s., and to be imprisoned at the discretion of the justices.—(3d Henry 8, cap. 9.)

PINS.—No person shall put to sale

any pins, but only such as shall be double-headed, and have the heads soldered fast to the shank and well smoothed; the shank well shaven; the point well and round filed, cauted, and sharpened.—(34th and 35th Hen. 8, cap. 6.)

WITCHCRAFT, &c.—It shall be felony to practise, or cause to be practised, conjuration, witchcraft, enchantment, or sorcery, to get money; or to consume any person in his body, members, or goods; or to provoke any person to unlawful love; or to declare where goods stolen be; or, for the despite of Christ, or lucre of money, to pull down any cross.—(33d Henry 8th, cap. 8.)

DRUNKENNESS—Every person convicted of the offence of drunkenness, shall forfeit 5s.; and every person that shall again be convicted, shall be bound in two sureties to be from thenceforth of good behaviour.—(4th James 1st, cap. 5.)

APPAREL—No servant of husbandrie, nor common labourer, shall weare in their clothing any cloth whereof the broad yard shall pass the price of two shillings; nor shall suffer their wives to weare any kercheffe whose price exceedeth twentie-pence. And it is ordeined and enacted, that no manner of person vnder the estate of a Lord, shall weare any gowne or mantell, vnless it bee of such length, that hee being vpright, it shall couer his * * * and buttocks, vpon paine to forfeit 20s.—(22d Edw. 4th, cap. 1.)

2 TREMENDOUS CATARACT.

THE river Connecticut is 500 miles long, and at its mouth four miles wide. Above 500 rivulets, which issue from ponds, lakes, &c. fall into it. The stream within its channel or inner banks is in general about half a mile wide; but, 200 miles from its mouth there is a narrow channel, only 5 yards across, formed by two shelving rocks, whose tops intercept the clouds; through this passage all the waters of the river find a passage. In the month of March, when the melting of the snow overflows the rivulets, they swell the Connecticut to such a degree, that above this chan-

nel it sometimes becomes more than 20 miles wide, and ships of war may sail over lands, which afterwards produce the greatest crops of hay and grain of any in America. People, who have nerve enough to listen to the groans and roaring of the water as it trembles, struggles, and thunders through this awful passage, view with astonishment one of the grandest phenomena of the natural world. The water is consolidated by its swiftness, and the intensity of the pressure between the sturdy rocks, to such a degree of induration, that not even an iron crow can be forced into it. Here iron, lead, and cork have one common weight; the stream passes as irresistibly, if not as swiftly, as lightning; nor does the electric fire rend trees in pieces with greater ease than this mighty water. The passage is about 400 yards in length, and of a zig-zag form. At the height of the flood, masts and other timber are carried through the strait with incredible swiftness, and sometimes in safety; but, when the water begins to abate, they strike on one side or the other, and, though of the largest size, are rent in a moment into splinters. The meadows for many miles below are covered with immense quantities of wood, thus torn into pieces.

No living creature was ever known to pass through this perilous strait, except an Indian woman, who attempted to cross the river above it, but carelessly suffered her canoe to be drawn within the power of the current. Perceiving her danger, she took up a bottle of rum she had with her, drank the whole of it, and then lay down in her canoe, to meet her destiny. She mavelously passed through in safety, and was taken out of her canoe, quite intoxicated, several miles below the fall, by some Englishmen. Being asked how she could be so daringly imprudent as to drink such a quantity of rum, with the prospect of instant death before her, the squaw, as well as her condition would let her, replied, "Yes, it was too much rum at once, to be sure; but I was not willing to lose a drop of it; so I drank it, and you see I have saved it all."

ENGLISH CIPHER.

INSCRIPTION FOR THE INSIDE
OF A BOOK.

THE Cipher Prolamation, in No. 15, having greatly amused and interested our readers, we are induced to print one more article of the kind, which has been transmitted to us by our ingenious correspondent, ANASTANZA.

Jnrowa! pz kude xdvnr dm xod,
Grgcbs un gsmk' W hina ezfp yngw;
Qk tnakwb rzonny jal, kuyb Z nvc
Op qvml wtynj, fg fap sb tvre.
Nzzzyire sjr oiryav ojn zdac nd repst,
Dzkhgi qs lqrc sb egfa ya asvz.

To arrive at the meaning of this, recourse must be had to the annexed Table & Key:—

TABLE.

A & B	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z
C & D	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z
E & F	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
	y	z	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x
G & H	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
	x	y	z	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w
I & J	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
	w	x	y	z	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v
K & L	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
	v	w	x	y	z	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u
M & N	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
	u	v	w	x	y	z	n	o	p	q	r	s	t
O & P	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	n	o	p	q	r	s
Q & R	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	n	o	p	q	r
S & T	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	n	o	p	q
U & V	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	n	o	p
W & X	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	n	o
Y & Z	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	n

The KEY (which may be changed at pleasure) is, in this instance, LIBERTY, and is to be made use of in precisely the same manner as that to Buonaparte's Proclamation, formerly given; but as this number of our work will doubtless fall into the hands of many who have not seen the article alluded to, we deem it necessary to repeat the directions:—

Look in the column of capitals for L, which is the first letter of the KEY; then run your eye along the division of the TABLE in which it occurs, till you meet with J, the corresponding letter in the INSCRIPTION, and set down the letter which stands above (or below) it, viz. R. Proceed in the same manner with the second letter in the Key, and the second in the Inscription, which will produce E; and so on with the remainder, till all the letters in the Key are exhausted, when you must recommence with L. By this means you will discover the meaning of the Cipher.

Such of our correspondents as may feel inclined to exercise their patience and ingenuity upon this subject, are requested to favour us with the result of their labours. It will be seen that two friends, each possessing a copy of the Table, may, by its means, maintain a secret correspondence, which no one can possibly decipher, without being previously acquainted with the Key.

SILKWORMS.

To the curious observer of the works of Nature, there are few employments more delightful than the breeding and management of that wonderful insect the Silkworm, or which may be pursued with less trouble and expense. The season is now fast approaching at which the eggs should be hatched, and therefore a few directions for the propagation of the worms, plainly and concisely given, may not be unacceptable to some of our readers. Many treatises upon the subject have been published, but they are, for the most part, so prolix, and enter into so many unnecessary details, that they deter readers from the pursuit, by the imaginary difficulties with which they surround it, rather than persuade them to enter upon it, by setting forth the gratification it affords. In the following brief directions, which it will be seen are intended for utter novices, our aim has been to unite perspicuity with brevity, and, we trust, they will be found adequate to the purpose aimed at. We are persuaded that such of our readers as may be induced by the perusal of them to undertake the breeding of Silkworms, will, ere long, feel grateful to us for having suggested to them so cheap and fruitful a source of amusement.

The eggs of the Silkworm are about the size of mustard-seeds, and, when first laid, are yellow, but soon after become of a bluish colour. A hundred may be had for sixpence or a shilling in Covent-Garden Market, of the dealers in birds, squirrels, &c. The food of the worms being mulberry-leaves, the eggs must not be hatched till the buds of those trees begin to open, which is seldom sooner than the latter part of April, when, being placed before a window, in the sun, the worms will in three or four days make their appearance, about a quarter of an inch long, and of a black colour. From this diminutive size they, in three weeks, if properly fed, become two inches and a half long, by an inch and a half round, and acquire a cream colour; after which they desist from feeding, and begin to form their silk-balls. They take up

but little room, and may be conveniently kept in a broad, shallow drawer, the top of a hat-box, or something of the kind, strewed with mulberry-leaves, a large handful of which, in Covent-Garden Market, costs but a penny, and which, being placed on the flags of a cellar, or in an earthen vessel, will so retain their freshness, that the stock need not be renewed more than once a week.

As the worms make their appearance, place amongst them some of your youngest leaves, upon which they will speedily fasten, when you may remove them to your box or drawer: proceeding thus till all the leaves are hatched. Take particular care, however, that the leaves are not damp, and renew them once a day, placing the fresh leaves on the old ones, from which the worms will remove themselves. Some people brush the worms from the old leaves with the feather-end of a quill; but, this is not only a tedious process, but also hurtful to the insects. Be careful, however, to observe, ere you throw away the old leaves, that no worms remain upon them.

When the worms are about to spin, they discontinue eating for a day or two, at the end of which time you will perceive the silk begin to issue from their mouths. Remove them from the box, as gently as possible, deposite them in a small piece of paper, twisted into the form of a cone, pin them against the wall of the room, and there leave them for ten or twelve days, which is the time they generally occupy in spinning. The completion of their task will be ascertained by taking down the paper, and gently shaking it, when, if the whole is spun, you will perceive the insect (now transformed into a grub) vibrate against the walls of its prison.

Being previously provided with a silk-reel, which may be had for a trifle at the Tunbridge-ware shops, take from the paper the ball of silk, which is about the size of a pigeon's egg, and having detached the floss or flue which surrounds it, you will discover the end of the clue. Attach this to one of the rods of the reel, place the

ball in a cup of luke-warm water, and proceed to reel off the silk. When the whole is unwound, you will find the grub, inclosed in a substance resembling tissue-paper, which carefully open, and remove the insect.

The grubs must be buried in a dish of bran, whence, in a few days, they will emerge, transformed into moths. Having lined with paper the bottom of the box in which you fed the worms, place thereon the moths, which speedily couple; the female then lays her eggs, to the number of three or four hundred; and, in a few days afterwards, both males and females die. The papers of eggs you must preserve in a cool, dry place, for the following summer. If the grubs are allowed to remain in the balls till they become moths, they eat their way out, and destroy the silk.

Having thus detailed the process of breeding the worms, and described the several metamorphoses they undergo, we shall next week wind up the subject with a few general observations.

Interesting Varieties.

DIMINUTIVE WRITING.

HOWES, in his *Chronicle*, p. 680, under date 1576, writes as follows:—

"A strange piece of work, and almost incredible, was brought to pass by an Englishman, born within the city of London, and a clerk of the Chancery, named Peter Bales, who, by his industry and practice of his pen, contrived and writ, within the compass of a penny, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, a Prayer to God, a Prayer for the Queen, his Posy, his Name, the Day of the Month, the Year of our Lord, and the Reign of the Queen: and at Hampton Court he presented the same to the Queen's Majesty in the head of a ring of gold, covered with chrystal; and presented therewith an excellent spectacle, by him devised, for the easier reading thereof, whereof her Majesty read all that was written therein, and did wear the same upon her finger."

THE AMERICAN MUSE.

THOUGH the Americans have not yet any GREAT poets to boast of, they possess several very pleasant ones, with some of whose productions we shall, from time to time, make our readers acquainted. Of the subjoined two pieces the first (taken from a volume called "Fanny," published in 1821) has much feeling and delicacy of expression; while the second, from the "American Monthly Magazine," serves to shew the omnipotent influence of genius, and how highly the talents of the "Ariosto of the North" are estimated "beyond the vast Atlantic."

NATURE'S MELODY.

THERE'S music in the forest leaves,
When summer winds are there,
And in the laugh of forest girls,
That braid their sunny hair;
The first wild bird that sips the dew
From violets of the spring,
Has music in his song, and in
The fluttering of his wing.

To-day the forest leaves are green,
They'll wither on the morrow,
And the maiden's laugh be chang'd ere
long

To the widow's wail of sorrow.
Come with the winter snows, and ask
Where are the forest birds,
The answer is a silent one,
More eloquent than words.

ON A STONE BROUGHT FROM THE ISLAND OF THE "LADY OF THE LAKE,"
BY A FRIEND WHO HAD VISITED
LOCH KATRINE.

THOU little brown pebble! oh, what
hast thou seen,
Since the flood roll'd thee up on thy island
of green;
How many vast ages have travers'd thee
o'er,
Like wave after wave, on thy lake-girded
shore!
How alter'd are all things, while thou
art alone
Unalter'd, unchang'd, the same little
brown stone!
How many huge trees have sprung up
where you lay,

Have flourish'd, and wither'd, and mould-
 der'd away!
 How long was the time, when the deer's
 tread alone
 Tore the branches away which thy lake
 had o'ergrown;
 When the eagle alone woke the echoes
 that slept
 On the mountains around which thy pa-
 radise kept!--
 Ah, what hast thou witness'd since man
 sway'd thy shore!
 Saw'st thou the first boat which that
 plunderer bore?
 And well hast thou mark'd every change
 he has made,
 Since he first drove thy deer from their
 far-spreading shade?
 Wast thou there when fair Ellen first
 walked on thy shore?
 Didst thou see the proud bark as the
 pine-flag they bore?
 Didst thou bear the loud shout of the
 Saxon afar,
 And saw'st thou the clans as they fell in
 the war?
 Or has thy fair lake never heard the
 war cry,
 Sounding shrill as the bird of thine own
 native sky?
 Is it fiction alone that endears thee to us?
 If Scott had not sung, should we feel to-
 wards thee thus?---
 No, thou little brown stone, undisturb'd
 on thy shore
 Thou still might'st have listen'd to Loch
 Katrine's roar,
 Unheeded the heath-bell might bloom on
 thy isle,
 And thy lakelet, unlov'd, in the sun-
 beams might smile,
 And the cushat-dove's notes, as in days
 that are past,
 Sound back to the moss-rocks the deer-
 hunter's blast.
 How great is thy magic, then, bard of the
 North,
 When thou giv'st to a pebble a diamond's
 worth?
 And a little brown stone from Loch
 Katrine's shore
 Is more valued by us than Peruvian ore!

THE WARNING VOICE.

FROM CALMET'S "DISSERTATION
 ON APPARITIONS."

"A gentleman in France, by profes-
 sion a lawyer, being in bed and fast
 asleep, was awakened by a voice which
 repeated several times something

which he did not understand; but he
 got up on this extraordinary occa-
 sion, and wrote down the words
 which he had heard, in French char-
 acters, as follow:—"APITHI, ONK
 OSPHRAINAY TEN SEEN APSYCHI-
 AN." Having done so, he endeavour-
 ed to sleep again, but could not shut
 his eyes all the rest of the night, the
 strange words still sounding in his
 ears; and finding himself extremely
 uneasy, he determined to rise, and
 pass the time away by studying a
 cause which he had to report that
 morning. Still the strangeness of the
 noise dwelt so upon his mind, that he
 could not at all fix his attention; he,
 therefore went to a coffee-house very
 early, where, meeting with some
 friends, he shewed them the slip of
 paper upon which he had written the
 unaccountable words he had heard,
 when one present, M. De Saumaise,
 looking at it, declared the words to
 be Syriac, and to mean literally,
 "Depart! hast thou no apprehension
 of thy death?" This was received
 with a loud laugh, and the warning
 treated as a jest and an invention;
 but the gentleman, taking it in a more
 serious light, left his house the same
 day, and it fell flat to the ground the
 following night."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—Investigator, G. J., and
 George. The Poems by Mrs. C. B.
 Wilson are come to hand, and we scarce-
 ly need add that they will be inserted
 without delay. Clio's packet shall be
 made good use of; such kind attention
 demands our warmest thanks. A com-
 munication lies at the Printer's for J.
 W. F. We are compelled, through a
 press of matter, to postpone the Sphinx
 till our next.

We are sorry to find that the cor-
 respondent who forwarded us the "Im-
 promptu on Achilles," as an original ar-
 ticle, was guilty of an imposition, it hav-
 ing previously been printed in a publica-
 tion called "The Athenæum." The
 conductors of that work, we trust will
 believe that our piracy was quite unin-
 tentional, and arose intirely from a paltry
 trick by which all editors are liable to be
 deceived.

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 22.

SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove."
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKSPEARE.



HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE.

SECTION II.—This cut is copied from the same rare Map as that given in Number 20, of which, in fact, it forms an immediate continuation, shewing the appearance of the western extremity of Bankside in the 16th century, and offering a curious contrast to the present state of that quarter of the metropolis. The site of Paris-Garden Stairs, previously noticed, is distinguished by the letter D.* and it will be seen that the thinly-scattered buildings reached but a little way beyond it. What is now called Blackfriars' Road, was then but a way across the fields; if, indeed, there then existed any road at all in that direction.

The rage for Bear-baiting prevailed in the 16th century among all orders of people. It was one of the diversions Queen Elizabeth partook of during her visit to Kenilworth, in 1576;

and the French Ambassador was entertained by her with an exhibition of the kind at the Hope, on Bankside, (the building marked A. in the cut given with our 20th number.) An example thus set by Royalty, soon spread through every rank; and Bear and Bull baiting became general amusements in England. Shakspeare has alluded to these sports in many places; and they equally attracted the notice of foreign and domestic historians. Hentzner, a German traveller in England, whose Itinerary was printed in 1598, was a spectator of these exhibitions, which he circumstantially describes. Speaking of the Theatres, he says,—“There is still another place built in the form of a theatre, which serves for the baiting of bulls and bears; they are fastened behind, and then worried by great English bull-dogs, but not without great risk to the dogs, from the horns of the one and the teeth of the other; and it sometimes happens that they are killed on the spot, but fresh ones are immediately supplied.” He adds an account

* Paris-Garden Stairs, opposite Puddle Dock, were in existence till the year 1816, when the site was purchased by a Mr. Devey, a Coal-Merchant, and converted into a wharf.

of a still more inhuman practice, that of whipping a blind bear to death, with which we shall not disgust our readers.

Stowe, speaking of these Amphitheatres, says, they were appropriated for the keeping of "bears, bulls, and other beasts to be baited; and also mastives, in their several kennels, were there nourished to bait them. These beasts were kept in plots of ground, scaffolded about, for the beholders to stand safe." But though such precautions were used, a terrible accident happened here on Sunday, January 13, 1583, by the fall of a scaffold, which had been overloaded. The fanatical writers of the time, forgetting the passage of Scripture, touching "those on whom the tower in Siloah fell," represented this disaster as a judgment from heaven, because the exhibition took place on a Sunday, which was a day particularly set apart for the sport. Amongst the rest, Pryne, in his "*Histriomastix*," p. 557, fol. gives the following account, but his description is probably greatly overcharged:—

"Upon the 13th January, Anno 1583, being the Lord's day, an infinite number of people, men, women, and children, resorted unto Paris Garden, to see beare-baying, playes, and other pastimes; and being altogether mounted aloft upon these scaffolds and galleries, and in the midst of all their jollity and pastime, all the whole building (not one stick so much as standing) fell down miraculously to the ground, with much horror and confusion. In the fall of it, five men and two women were slain outright; and above one hundred and fifty persons more, sore wounded and bruised, whereof many died shortly after; some of them having their braines dashed out, some their heads all to quash, some their legges broken, some their armes, some their backes, some one hurt, some another; there being nothing heard there but wofull shriekes and cries, which did even pierce the skies; children bewailing there the death and hurts of their parents, parents of their children, wives of their

husbands, and husbands of their wives; so that every way, from foure of the clocke in the afternoone, till nine at night, especially over London Bridge, many were carried in chaires, and led betwixt their friends, and so brought to their houses, with sorrowful heavy hearts, like lame cripples. A just, though terrible judgment of God, upon these play-haunters and prophanners of his holy-day."

The Puritans, as observed above, strenuously maintained that this incident was a visitation of Providence; and the Lord Mayor for that year (Sir Thomas Blanke) wrote to the Lord Treasurer, "that it gave great reason to acknowledge the hand of God, for breach of the Lord's Day," and therefore begged he would exert himself to suppress the diversions. The accident, however, was forgotten, and the sports carried on as usual, for Stowe says, that in his time the beargardens on Bankside, for the baiting of bulls and bears, were still much frequented.

PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

(Concluded from page 162.)

JULIAN followed his conductor, with a throbbing heart, into the hall, and when Alice, quitting the paternal embrace, was aware of the unexpected guest, a deep blush plainly shewed that his sudden appearance was any thing but indifferent to her. Bridgenorth led the way to the inner apartment, and taking a lamp from the table, said to Julian, "I must be the uncourtly chamberlain, who must usher you to a place of repose more rude than you have been accustomed to occupy."

Julian accompanied him in silence up an old-fashioned staircase, to a small apartment, of which a pallet bed, two small chairs, and a stone table, were the only furniture.

"Julian Peveril," said Bridgenorth, "the shaft is whetted, and the bow is bent against thee; but, why should I conceal it from thee? my heart yearns for thee, as a woman's for her first-born. To thee I will give, at the risk of my reputation, the means of escape.

This staircase descends to the garden,—the postern is unlatched,—on the right hand are the stables, where you will find a horse; take it, and if you follow my counsel, you will soon get beyond the British seas." Then turning hastily away, he left the room, and Julian heard him hasten down the narrow staircase, as if distrusting his own resolution. He therefore was compelled to take his leave of Moultrassie, without farther parley or explanation. The reader may imagine how oft he looked back, and tried to guess, among the lights which twinkled in various parts of the building, which of them gleamed from the bower of Alice, till the road turning into another direction, he sank into a deep reverie, in which he remained for a considerable time. At length, returning to himself, he prosecuted his journey with all speed towards the metropolis, and having arrived, took up his abode at an obscure inn in the suburbs, where he remained incognito, while he communicated with those friends whom he thought most likely to lend assistance to his parents, as well as to the countess, in their present situation of doubt and danger.

In the meanwhile, Sir Geoffrey and Lady Peveril, having been conveyed by Bridgenorth's party from Martindale to London, were confined in the Tower, where the old knight soon after received notice that his trial would take place on the seventh succeeding day. Upon the circumstance of the trial itself, we shall dwell but very briefly; suffice it to say, that the fury and fears of the people respecting the Popish plot, had now subsided; the character of the evidence was more closely sifted, and justice done to the accused. Accordingly, a verdict of "Not Guilty" was pronounced, and Sir Geoffrey was dismissed from the bar.

Within four weeks afterwards, the bells of Martindale-Moultrassie were ringing for the union of the families from whose estates it takes its compound name; and the beacon-light of the castle, blazing high over hill and dale, summoned all to rejoice who were within twenty miles of its gleam.

SILKWORMS.

(Concluded from page 167.)

The worms, between the period of hatching and that of spinning, cast their skin or slough four times, previous to which they appear sickly, and refuse their food, but after each moult, increase in size, and become of a lighter colour. Avoid giving them a superabundance of leaves, for several reasons; firstly, because of the waste it occasions—secondly, and chiefly, because the worms, being thereby surfeited, will not so readily leave the old ones, but remain on them till they become withered. The tenderest leaves you can select should be allotted to the young worms; and should you have none but those which are full-blown, slice them during the first six or eight days. Some people, when mulberry-leaves cannot conveniently be had, substitute those of the lettuce, elm, or bramble; but worms so fed are always diminutive, and produce but little silk. In fact, they who cannot procure mulberry-leaves, had better not attempt to breed the worms at all.

Each silk-pod is formed of two continuous glossy threads, so closely united, that to the naked eye they appear but one, in fineness equal to the smallest hair. There is a glutinous matter intermingled with the silk, to dissolve which it is necessary to place the ball in warm water, while reeling, as before directed. If the quantity of worms kept is large, a number of pods may be reeled off together. The silk is sometimes of a sea-green colour, sometimes white; but most commonly of a deep or pale yellow, and extremely glossy.

The worms should be kept in a dry room; and if, during the process of hatching or spinning, any of those cold damp days, so common in our climate, occur, it will be as well to have a fire lighted. During fine warm weather, the windows should be opened daily, to ventilate the apartment. Many people imagine that the smell of silkworms is noxious, but this notion is perfectly erroneous; though, when a room is kept closely shut, and dead

worms, decayed leaves, and dirt, are suffered to accumulate in a slovenly manner, the odour is doubtless pernicious.

When a cold backward spring, like the present, is succeeded by a few days of sultry weather, the worms will sometimes make their appearance before the mulberry leaves, even though the eggs are not exposed to the sun. When this is apprehended, put the eggs into a phial, covered with a piece of paper in which a few pin-holes are pricked, and set it in a cool place, where neither the heat of the sun nor of a fire can have access to it, yet free from moisture. This will delay their hatching till the beginning of May; and, if you are not then prepared with food, plunge the phial up to the neck in a vessel of water, which will farther retard the appearance of the worms; though this plan may prove fatal to them, should they have made any progress towards hatching, and therefore should never be resorted to till absolutely necessary.

More might be said upon the subject; but, they who feel desirous of breeding silkworms, will be enabled, we trust, by these rules, to gratify their inclination, without experiencing trouble or disappointment; though, of course, one season's experience will render them more at home upon the subject than the most voluminous descriptions. In what has been said, it will be seen that we have merely had in view the keeping a small number of worms, for the purpose of amusement, without any reference to the question, whether the breeding of them upon a large scale, for the sake of profit, is practicable in our climate. **TRUTH.**

POETRY AND POETS.

[UNDER this head we intend to give, from time to time, such anecdotes of poets, and brief comments upon their writings, as may occur to us in the course of our reading, or we may be favoured with by correspondents. Farther introduction is uncalled for, since the present specimen will sufficiently explain the nature of the plan.]

COLERIDGE'S "Christabel," as originally written, contained a line, which does not occur in the printed copy: it is that distinguished by inverted commas in the subjoined passage. Why it was omitted, 'tis difficult to understand, as its absence renders the meaning of the whole story very obscure.—

Her silken robe and inner vest
Dropt to her feet, and full in view
Behold! her bosom and half her side—
"Hideous, deform'd, and pale of hue."

Coleridge is an eternal talker. I once said to a friend of his, "Mr. C. occasionally lectures, I believe?"—"Occasionally!" exclaimed he; "he's ALWAYS lecturing."

Some of our readers may recollect that the preface to Dr. Polidori's celebrated literary forgery, the "Vampire," gives a curious anecdote of the powerful hold which the above-quoted passage from "Christabel" once took upon the imagination of the late P. B. Shelley. It is as follows:—

"One evening in 1816, during Lord Byron's residence near the Lake of Geneva, he and Shelly, with two ladies and a gentleman, after having perused a German work entitled "Phantasmagoriana," began relating ghost-stories; when his lordship having recited the beginning of "Christabel," then unpublished, it took so strong a hold of Mr. Shelley's mind, that he suddenly started up, and ran out of the room. Lord Byron and one of the company followed, and discovered him leaning against a mantle-piece, with cold drops of perspiration trickling down his face. After having given him something to refresh him, upon enquiring into the cause of his alarm, they found that his wild imagination having pictured to him the hideous bosom of the lady, he was obliged to leave the room, in order to destroy the impression."

CATULLUS AND GAY.—Has it ever been remarked that Gay's song in the "Beggar's Opera," "Virgins are like the fair flower, &c." is a literal verification of the beautiful "Carmen Nuptiale" of Catullus?

SIMILE.—In the poems of Mr. John Lowe, of Manchester, one of the very oddest volumes that ever was published, is the following simile:—

the lifted skiff,
SEER, LIKE A SOMETHING from a lofty
mountain.

MAZEPPA.—The dreadful punishment inflicted upon the hero of Lord Byron's poem, has an example in a newspaper called *Mercurius Politicus*, printed in the year 1655. The narrative is dated from Hamburgh:—

"This last week several waggoners coming from Breslaw to Silesia, upon their way into the Duke of Saxonic's country, perceived a stag with a man upon his back running with all his might: coming near the waggon's, he suddenly fell down; the poor man sitting upon his back made a pitiful complaint, how that the day before he was, by the Duke of Saxonic, for killing a deer, condemned to be bound with chains upon that stag, his feet bound fast under the stag's belly with an iron chain soldered, and his hands so chained to the horns. The miserable man begged earnestly that they would shoot him, to put him out of pain; but they durst not, fearing the Duke. Whilst they were talking with him, the stag got up again, and ran away with all its might. The waggoners computed that he had run, in 16 hours, 26 Dutch miles in the least; which makes near 100 of our English miles, in a direct line. The miseries which that poor creature did, and must undergo, especially if the stag killed him not in running, cannot be expressed, hardly imagined."

YOUNG, in the "Night Thoughts," speaking of the Day of Judgment, says,

"At midnight, when mankind is wrapt
in peace,
At midnight, 'tis presum'd, this pomp
will burst
From tenfold darkness."

I have heard this idea called sublime; but, to me it appears to be perfectly absurd. In the first place, we have no reason to suppose that the awful event alluded to will occur at midnight, any more than at mid-day.

And, secondly, even presuming that it may happen during our night, it should be remembered that it will then be broad day with our antipodes.

Interesting Varieties.

STANZAS,

BY MRS. CORNWELL BARN WILSON.

THY way along life's bright path lies,
Where flowers spring up before thee;
And faithful hearts and loving eyes
Assemble to adore thee;
The great and wise bend at thy shrine,
The fair and young pursue thee;
Fame's chaplets round thy temples twine,
And Pleasure smiles to woo thee!

Yet 'mid each blessing life can bring,
Thy breast is still repining;
'Tis cold as Ammon's icy spring,
O'er which no sun is shining.
And friendship's presence boasts no
charm,
And beauty's smiles are slighted;
Nor joy, nor fame the heart can warm,
That early love has blighted!

TO

FROM "THEATRICAL PORTRAITS,
AND OTHER POEMS," BY H. S.
VAN DYK, ESQ.

OH! wear this simple chain for me,
That, when long years have passed
away
Each severed link may offer thee
An emblem of my own decay.
Yet, no! an hour may see that chain
United by the hand of art:
But, what can ever join again
The rent links of a broken heart?

Recall the days when love's warm kiss
Gave transport to our cloudless youth,
Which linger'd fondly—like my bliss,
Then fled for ever—like thy truth.
The cold world's frown—the proud
man's scorn,—
To be by all forgot—revil'd,—
Oh! these, and more, I could have
borne,
Had'st thou but lov'd,—had'st thou
but smil'd.

My love has been "too deep for tears,"
And sighs have told it;—'twas confess'd
By ruin'd health, and blighted years,
By fallen hopes, and vanish'd rest.

Yet, wear this simple chain for me,
 And keep it as a parting token
 Of one, whose youthful LOVE to thee,
 Unlike his HEART, remain'd unbroken.

ENGLISH HORSES.

IF any proof were wanting of the superiority of the English breed of horses over that of every other country, it might be found in the avidity with which they are sought by foreigners. The exportation of them to Russia, France, Germany, &c. for the last five years has been so considerable, as to render it an object of some importance in a commercial point of view. But, this advantage, some of our continental neighbours are of opinion, will not long remain with us: they are fully aware of the cause of our superiority, and are in consequence endeavouring to establish RACES on the English plan, which, with a more careful selection of breeders than is observed in England, will, very soon, they say, enable them to excel us; and they anticipate a day, not very distant, when the English must send to the continent, if not for speedy, at least for SOUND horses.—The hint about soundness may be worth attention; but, for the rest, with the advantages this country already possesses, and so long as horse-racing continues to be followed up with spirit by her men of rank and opulence, there can be little to apprehend.—(“Stud-Book,” 1822.)

PEDESTRIANISM.

Selkirk, who lived a long time in the desert island of Juan Fernandez, became, by much practice, so fleet of foot, that he used to run down the wild goats; and being every day able to catch a greater number than he required for food, he was in the habit of slitting their ears, and then giving them their liberty. Commodore Anson found on his visit to that island, 40 years after Selkirk's liberation, many of those goats which had been marked by him, still living.

It is said that the British hero, Henry V. was so very active in running, that with the aid of two of his

lords, he could, without bow or other engine, run down and take a wild buck or doe in a large park.

On the 14th of January, 1759, George Guest, of Birmingham, undertook, for a wager, to walk 1000 miles in twenty-eight days. This he accomplished without any difficulty.

In July, 1765, a young woman walked, in twelve hours, from Blencozo to Newcastle—74 miles.

On Monday, the 29th of November, 1773, Foster Powell started at Hicks's Hall, at twenty minutes past twelve o'clock in the morning, and at nine o'clock on the night of that day arrived at Stamford—88 miles. Started on Tuesday from Stamford, at two o'clock in the morning, arrived at Doncaster at two in the afternoon—72 miles. On Wednesday, went from Doncaster to Ferrybridge—59 miles. On Thursday, from Ferrybridge to Grantham—65 miles. On Friday, from Grantham to Eaton—54 miles. On Saturday, from Eaton to Hicks's Hall, where he had first started, and where he arrived at half-past six in the evening—56 miles. Total 394 miles.

On Tuesday, September 27, 1787, the same Powell walked from Canterbury to London, and back again, a distance of 112 miles, in 28 hours and 53 minutes, for a bet of 100 guineas. It is a curious circumstance, that when Powell left London, some of his friends, who perceived that he was in a great heat, persuaded him to drink some wine and water. This had a very bad effect upon him; he was able to travel the next nine miles only at the rate of three miles an hour. After he left London he fell into a profound sleep, notwithstanding which untoward circumstance, he continued walking, avoiding, as somnambulists usually do, every thing dangerous.

In the same year, Powell walked from Maidenhead-bridge to London, and back again—50 miles, in seven hours.

Powell, who was a clerk to an attorney in New Inn, was about 5 feet 8 inches in height, of a slender form, but stout limbed.

In the year 1808, a regiment of the Spanish General Romana's troops marched, in one day, in making their escape from the Danish isles, over a space equivalent to 84½ English miles, which is one of the most extraordinary pedestrian exploits ever performed by so large a body of men.

THE SPHINX.

No. III.

A PUZZLE.

Arrange the following words, so as to form six rhyming lines in praise of Tobacco.

HEIGHTENER					
Wondrous	Virtues,	Dwell	Within	Tobacco	
Soothe	of	our	noxious	thoughts	
Delightful	fumes	disclose	thy	worth	
Shall	I	tell	thy	value	
To	the	world	and	how	
To	clear	humours	from	the	
Head	how	I	shall	joy	
To	cheer	all	such	whose	
Woes	of	the	heart	and	
WITH					

ENIGMAS.

1.

THOUGH banish'd from Heaven, and
sentenc'd to Hell,
The world still receives me, and owns I
excel.

The virgin disdains me, and maids dis-
approve,

But both must acknowledge I'm useful
in love.

To evil I'm known, and saintships all
flout me,

Yet angels and devils are nothing without
me.

To the wind I'm not useful, yet blow
with the gale;

I'm nothing to women, yet much to fe-
male.

Though far from a hero, and farther
from brave,

I scorn a base coward, and still am a slave.
I'm first as a lover, though nothing to

kiss,
Yet married and single can find me in
bliss.

I'm cold to good-nature, yet warm in
the soul;

I'm harden'd in malice, but gentle in
whole.

I'm nothing, yet all,—and all must con-
fess,

Without me they're nothing, and with
me they're less.

SEDEBOY.

2

I'm not what I was, but the very reverse;

I am what I was, which is still more per-
verse;

And all the day long, I do nothing but
fret,

Because I can't be what I never was yet.

CONUNDRUMS.

1. Why is the death of Socrates like
the upper room of a house?

2. Why was Titian's fat daughter
Mary like Cobbett?

3. If you give a kiss and take a kiss,
what does it make?

4. Why is a man sailing up the Ti-
guis, like one putting his father into a
sack?

5. What do we, when to increase the
effect, we diminish the cause?

6. Why is a nun who has seen a
young goat lying asleep, likely to give
intelligence of a stolen child?

7. Which letter in the alphabet is
most useful to a deaf old woman?

SOLUTIONS TO ARTICLES,

IN NO. II. OF THE SPHINX, P. 143.

THE LOVE-LETTER.—Begin at the
right-hand corner, and read each co-
lumn from bottom to top.

QUIBBLE.—“Run, mother, the sow
is eating the apples!”—The quibbles
are on these words:—MEA, the impera-
tive mood of the verb Meo; EST, the

third person singular, present tense, of the verb Edo; and MALA, the plural of Malum.

QUERY.—A potatoe, because nothing is better than heaven, and a potatoe is better than nothing.

CHARADE.—Love-ly.

FIRST RIDDLE.—An egg.

SECOND RIDDLE.—A lady's lips.

•• Correct Solutions to several of these were forwarded by J. H., Nemo, T. G., and A Voice from a Nutshell. Various articles we have received shall appear, but we doubt whether the SPHINX sufficiently suits the taste of the generality of our readers to authorize our giving it a place very frequently.

The Whiff's Munchion.

GIN.—The following elegant lines are inscribed above the door of the Red-Lion public-house, near Greenwich. We scarcely know which to admire the more, their rhyme or their reason:—

"Let us go in, and have some gin,
I know 'twill make us cheerful;
This is the shop where friends do stop,
And drink it by the pail-ful."

LOSS OF SIGHT.—A rich but miserly man invited a poor acquaintance to dine with him, and when they were seated at table, helped him to a very small piece of meat; upon which, the poor man, starting from his chair, exclaimed, "I'm blind! I'm blind! I'm blind!" The other, astonished at this sudden misfortune, begged his guest to resume his seat, and try if he could not see at all; on this, the poor man, taking up his plate, said, "I think I can see A LITTLE BIT."

L. W.

THE FIRE-FLY.—There lived some years since at Clam Town, near Egg Harbour, in America, a man, who frequently laid wagers and made boasts that he could bear any number of

mosquitos to sting his naked body, without in the least flinching, or shewing any signs of uneasiness. Upon one of these bragging occasions, a gentleman present expressed some doubts of the truth of what he said; "but," added he, "as it is now the month of August, the salt marshes are close at hand, and the mosquitos numerous enough in all conscience, here are five guineas for you, if you will consent to be stripped to the buff, tied hand and foot, and lie blindfolded a quarter of an hour, without once flinching, crying out, or making wry faces, when you are stung." For the sake of the five guineas, which he thought he should easily win, the man accepted the offer, and was stripped accordingly.

For about ten minutes he endured the tormenting stings of the mosquitos with all the composure imaginable, seeming to regard them no more than if his skin had been leather. The gentleman, upon this, began to fear that he should lose his money, as the fellow appeared to be actually devoid of sensation; he therefore slyly slipped into an adjacent hat, set fire to the end of his walking-stick, and instantly, returning, gently applied it to the naked back of the man, who immediately shrunk from the application, and roared like a bull. "You have lost," said the gentleman. "I have lost, sure enough," replied the fellow, "but had it not been for that d—d ganninipper,* I should have won as easy as kiss my hand."

* A kind of large horse-fly, the sting of which is extremely poisonous as well as painful.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—G. S. Willmer, D. Albion, D. B., Frisk, J. W. F., Clion, and J. S. Woodbury.

The Solutions of the "Enigma" shall be noticed in our next.

ERRATUM.—Page 166, column 2, line 17, for leaves read eggs.

THE NIC-NAG;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 23.

SATURDAY, MAY 3, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Mericrown it."—SHAKSPEARE.



LONDON STONE.

It forms part of the design of our work to notice the most remarkable pieces of antiquity which exist in various parts of England, and more particularly in and near to London; we therefore this week lay before our readers a correct view of the present appearance of that very celebrated relic of former days, London Stone, in Cannon Street.

The origin of this Stone, which has been carefully preserved for ages, is lost in the dimness of remote antiquity; and the conjectures of antiquaries respecting the purpose for which it was erected, have been equally numerous and discordant. Some have deemed it to be a Roman standard, from which distances were measured; others have conjectured that its site was the principal street of London while occupied by the Romans, and that, from the Stone, public notices and proclamations were promulgated. This opinion is combatted by a third party, who

maintain that it marked a spot dedicated to the tendering and making of payments by debtors to their creditors. Most, however, agree that it is a Roman fragment; and Malcolm asserts that Sir Christopher Wren, after carefully examining it, pronounced it to be the remains of some monument, situated in a Roman Forum. Its antiquity indeed cannot be questioned. There is in existence a M.S. "Gospel-Book" presented to Christ-Church, Canterbury, by Ethelstan, King of the West Saxons, at the end of which occurs a notice of lands in London, belonging to the said church, "lying near unto LONDON STONE." Certain writers, however, have claimed for it a still greater antiquity, dating its origin at a period prior to the arrival of the Romans in Britain, and insisting that it formed an object of heathen worship in a Druidical temple.

Tradition asserts that the present stone was originally fixed upon ano-

ther, and the two together constituted a Palladium, which it was believed would protect London from danger of every description while they remained in that situation. To this opinion Fabian, an old poet, alludes, when he compares the security of the city, founded upon faith in the rock Christ, with the stability of the Stone upon the foundation in question. He says:—

"It is so sure a stone that that is sette upon;

For, though some have it thrette
With manases* grym and grette,
Yet hurte had it none."

Till the last century, the Stone stood on the South side of Cannon Street, opposite St. Swithin's Church, between the foot-path and the kennel, fixed in the ground, and protected against injury from carriages, &c., by stout iron bars. It appears among other purposes, to have been formerly considered a rallying-point for insurgents, for when Jack Cade entered London by way of Southwark, he marched immediately to Cannon Street, and striking his sword upon the Stone, exclaimed, "Now is Mortimer lord of this city," an incident which Shakspeare has conferred immortality upon in the 2d part of Henry 6, act 4, scene 6. Some time in the last century, the relic, which is now but of small dimensions, was removed from its ancient site, inclosed in a case, hollowed out in a block of stone, and placed in a niche in the southern-wall of St. Swithin's Church, as shewn in our print. It is certainly somewhat singular that so much care should have been taken from age to age to preserve the stone, and so little known of its nature and origin.

Such of our readers as may take the trouble of paying a visit to Cannon Street, for the purpose of comparing our representation with the original, will find that the drawing has been executed with extreme fidelity. Exactly opposite St. Swithin's Church are the London Stone Dining Rooms, from the windows of which they may view the relic at their leisure, and thus

gratify at once their palates and their antiquarian curiosity.

MAY DAY.

We are irresistibly tempted, by the influence of the season, to give ourselves up to the fascinations of this beauteous budding-time and its old recollections. We can now understand, while the blue vault is scarcely speckled with a cloud, and the foliage of the trees has put forth its freshest green, and the hawthorn is budding, and the thrush is singing over his sitting mate—we can now understand the enthusiasm of one of our old rural poets:—

"Get up, get up, for shame! the blooming morn

Upon her wing presents the god unshorn:

See how Aurora throws her fair

Fresh-quilted colours through the air.

Get up, sweet slug-a-bed! and see

The dew bespangling herb and tree:

Each flower has wept, and bow'd toward the east

Above an hour since, yet you not drest;

Nay, not so much as out of bed,

When all the birds have matins said,

And sung their thankful hymns;—'tis sin,

Nay, profanation, to keep in;—

When as a thousand virgins on this day
Spring sooner than the lark, to fetch in
May."

Alas! the virgins in the towns and cities now rise when the sun is hastening to his meridian; and even the lasses of the village are too politely precise to wet their feet in the dewy hedges, or to risk their muslins in the hawthorn-bush. If there are any of the fairer sex who think that May-day should not quite be forgotten, they cultivate the feeling with no poetical rapture, but with the singleness of "pecuniary views." They are of the same species as the garland-seller, who sung her solitary song for an eleemosynary penny:—

"Rise up, maidens! fie for shame!
I've been four long miles from home;
I've been gath'ring my garlands gay;
Rise up, fair maids, and take in your
May."

Even this relic of the "olden time" is worn out, and May-day is left in mockery to the chimney-sweepers.

* Menaces.

Without rubbing up much of the pedantry of antiquarianism, it may be amusing just to look back upon the gladsome intoxication of happy spirits to which our ancestors surrendered themselves at this genial season. Wherever we can, we will let the old writers tell the story in their own terms.

The formal Mr. Bourne, who quetted with ancient customs, by diligently recording them, with a pious abuse of their Heathenish vanities, says—"On the calends, or the first day of May, commonly called May-day, the juvenile part of both sexes were wont to rise a little after midnight, and walk to some neighbouring wood, accompanied with music and the blowing of horns; where they broke down branches from the trees, and adorned them with nosegays and crowns of flowers. When this was done, they returned with their booty homewards, about the rising of the sun, and made their doors and windows to triumph in the flowery spoil. The after-part of the day was chiefly spent in dancing round a tall pole, called a May-pole; which, being placed in a convenient part of the village, stood there, as it were, consecrated to the goddess of flowers, without the least violation offered it in the whole circle of the year."

The Puritans waged war with these May-poles, and indeed with all the indications of a full-hearted simplicity which were the echo of the universal harmony of Nature. The May-poles never held up their heads after the civil wars. The "strait-laced" exulted in their fall, but we believe the people were neither wiser nor happier for their removal:—

"Happy the age, and harmelesse were
the dayes.

For then true love and amity were
found,

When every village did a May-pole raise,
And Whitsun ales and May-games did
abound;

And all the lusty yonkers in a rout,
With merry lasses daunced the rod
about:

Then Friendship to the banquet bid
the guests,

And poor men fared the better for
their feasts.

Alas, poor May-poles! what should be
the cause,

That you were almost banisht from the
earth,

Who never were rebellious to the lawes!
Your greatest crime was honest, harm-
lesse, mirth."

But the sports of May were not confined to the villages. Even the gorgeous pomp of the old Courts did not disdain to borrow a fragrance and freshness from the joys of the people. Hall, the historian, gives us an account of "Henry the Eighth's riding a May-ing from Greenwich to the high ground of Shooter's-hill, with Queen Katharine his wife, accompanied with many lords and ladies." The good people of London in those days were not ashamed to let in a little of the light of creation upon their mercantile pursuits. Stow tells us, "In the month of May, the citizens (of all estates), in every parish, or sometimes two or three parishes joining together, had their several Mayings, and did fetch in May-poles with divers warlike shows, with good archers, morrice-dancers, and other devices for pastime all the day long: and towards the evening they had stage-plaies, and bone-fires in the streets."

He adds, "In the country, on May-day morning, every man, except impediment, would walk into the sweete meddows and green woods, there to rejoyce their spirits with the beauty and savour of sweete flowers, and with the harmony of birds praising God in their kind." But, the opinion of good old Stow was not that of a godly but less renowned person yeleft Stubbes,* who in his puritanical work the "Anatomic of Abuses," rages, as if he would pull down the poor happy May-pole with his own proper claws. "Thus equipped," saith he, "it is reared, with handkerchiefs and flagges streaming on the top; they strewe the ground round about it; they bind green boughs about it; they set up summer halles, bowers, and arbours, hard by it;

* See our 14th number, page 103.

and then fall they to banquetting and feasting, to leaping and dancing about it, as the heathen people did at the dedication of their idolls. I have heard it credibly reported, by men of great gravity, credite, and reputation, that of fourtie, three-score, or an hundred maides going to the wood, there have scarcely the third part of them returned home againe as they went."

We are not romantic enough to expect that the present age will revive any of these simple amusements of its predecessors;—that the "wassail bowl" of Christmas or the garland of May will again come amongst us with their hearty and inspiring recollections. Those who now love Nature and cheerfulness must confine their rapture to their own families—to their fire-sides in winter, and their gardens in the sunny season. We would only hint that our ancestors, in proclaiming their enthusiasm for the freshness of a beautiful world, were paying a true and affecting homage to its Creator; and though their cheerfulness might be boisterous, and its origin Heathenish, it was far better than that apathy which passes by the wonders and beauties of the earth with indifference; or that precision, which, in deprecating the exercise of pure and simple enjoyments, shuts up the heart against the best feelings of kindness to man, or devotion to God.

GHOST STORIES.—No. III.

DR. JOHNSON'S curiosity respecting ghosts has been ridiculed by those who do not consider that a man who had once seen the spirit of a departed being, could have no farther doubt of his own future existence. At present we have the strongest possible evidence of such existence, short of that of our senses; but, every man must allow that the re-appearance of a deceased person would be the most awful and interesting additional proof that could be submitted to him. They only can feel indifferent upon this subject who never speculate at all; or, whose speculations have led them to the dreary conclusion that death is an everlasting sleep. Impressed with such sentiments, we shall continue this series of Ghost-

Stories so often as we meet with any relation that seems to be tolerably authenticated, and in which the supernatural agency appears to have been intended to effect some important end, beyond the power of man to produce. These narratives may be true, or they may be false; but, really sensible persons will not come to the latter conclusion, without carefully examining the evidence by which they are supported.

On the 5th of December, 1640, Dr. John Atherton, Bishop of Waterford, was executed at Dublin, for the commission of various enormous crimes. A scarce old tract relating to this affair, published by Curll, 1711, contains the following singular statements, which will probably be quite new to the readers of Ghost-Stories, having hitherto escaped the notice of collectors of such things. The writer's station in life was so respectable, and his relation is so circumstantial, that it merits particular attention:—

"A True and amazing narration of the most apparent, undoubted, and prodigious apparition that was ever heard of: enough to convince the greatest atheist. Copied from a M.S. of the Rev. Mr. John Quick, Minister of the Gospel, lately deceased in September, 1706; the truth whereof is attested by him, under his own hand.

At Minehead in the county of Somerset, Anno Dom. 1636, or thereabouts, there lived an ancient gentlewoman, the widow of Mr. Leaky, whose only son, a merchant in that town, drove a considerable trade betwixt it and Waterford, and some other parts in Ireland, and was reputed worth about 8 or 10,000*l*. This gentleman (the son) had but one child by his wife, of both which we shall hear enough by and by.

Mrs. Leaky, the old gentlewoman, was of a very free, pleasant temper, and exceeding good company; inasmuch, that people would say to her and to one another, that it was a thousand pities such an excellent gentlewoman should die. And in the midst of her mirth, she would tell her friends, "As pleasing as my company is now to you, you will not care to see and

converse with me when I am dead, though I believe you will do it."

However, die she did; and being buried, she was sometime after seen again by night; and at last at noon-day, in her own house, in the town and fields, at sea and at shore, whereof I shall give you some eminent instances.

A doctor of physic that lived at Minehead, having been in the country to visit a patient, as he returned home, towards the evening, met with an ancient gentlewoman; he accosts her very civilly, falls into discourse with her, and coming to a stile, lends her his hand to help her over, but feels it to be prodigious cold, which makes him to eye this gentlewoman more attentively than he had done before; and he observed, that in speaking she never opened her lips; nor did she ever move her eyes or eye-lids. This, and some other circumstances, affrighted him, and suggested to his fearful mind, that it must be Mrs. Leaky, of whom there was a general talk in the town, that she walked again, and had been seen of many; whereupon when he came to the next stile, he passed over, but never turned back to pay her the ceremony of his hand, which so incensed this old hag, that she grew as froward and as sullen as the doctor, and gave him no more mouth speech, since he was become as mute as a fish towards her; and when they came to the next stile, she got before him, and sat just in the middle of it; so that when he came to it, the way was stopt; hereupon he turns aside, and goes to a gate, thinking to cross over that, to go into the highway; but when he comes thither, she sat astride over that also; but some how or other he got over, and coming to town with the spectre, she gives him a kick, and bids him to be more civil next time to an ancient gentlewoman.

But this was nothing to the pranks she played in her son's house and elsewhere. She now at noon-day appeared upon the Quay at Minehead, and cries out "A boat, a boat, hoe!" If any boatman or seaman was in sight, and did not come, they were sure to be cast away; and if they did come, it

was all one, it was equally dangerous to please or to displease her. Her son had several ships sailing betwixt Ireland and England; no sooner did they come in the sight of England, and make land, but this ghost would appear, in the same garb and likeness as when she was alive; and standing at the main-mast, would blow with a whistle; and though it was never so great a calm, yet presently there would arise a most dreadful storm, that would wreck and drown the ship and goods, only the seamen escaped with their lives, as the devil had not power from God to take them away. Yet at this rate, by her frequent apparitions and disturbances, she made a poor merchant of her son; for his fair estate was all buried in the sea; and he that was once worth thousands, was reduced to a low condition in the world; for whether the ships were his own or hired, if he had but goods aboard to the value of twenty shillings, this troublesome ghost would come as before, and whistle at the main-mast, and then ship and goods went all, to wreck out of hand; insomuch, that he could at last get no ship wherein to store his goods, nor any mariner to sail in them, for they, knowing what an uncomfortable and fatal voyage they should make of it, did refuse to serve.

In her son's house she had constant haunts by night and day; but whether he did not or would not own it, he always professed he never saw her. Sometimes when he hath been a-bed with his wife, she would cry out, "Husband, look! there is your mother!" And when he turned on the right side to see her, she was got to the left, and when he turned to the left side, she was got to the right. One evening, their only child, a girl of about five or six years old, lying in a truckle bed beside them, cried out, "Oh! help me, father, help me, mother, for grand-mother will choak me!" And before they could get to the child's assistance, she had actually murdered it; and they found the poor child dead, her throat having been pinched by two fingers, which stopped her breath and strangled her. This was

the sorest of all their afflictions ; their estate was gone before, and now their only child was gone also ; you may guess at their great grief and sorrow.

One morning after the child's funeral, her husband being abroad, Mrs. Leaky, the younger, went up into her chamber to dress her head, and as she was looking in the glass, she spies her mother-in-law, the old beldam, looking over her shoulder. This cast her into a great horror, but recollecting herself, and recovering her reason, having cast up a short silent prayer to God, she turns about and speaks to her. "In the name of God, mother, why do you trouble my peace?" saith the spectre, "I will do thee no hurt."—"What would you have of me?" saith the daughter "Why," saith the spectre, "thou must go over to Ireland, and visit thy uncle, the lord bishop of Waterford, and tell him, that unless he does repent of the sin whereof he knows himself guilty, he shall be hanged."—"Mother," saith she, "this is a thriftless errand that you send me about ; my uncle is a great man, and if I should deliver him such an idle message, I should but render myself ridiculous : pray, mother, what is the sin whereof he is guilty, and must repent of, or be hanged?"—"Why," saith she, "if you will know, it is murder ; for, when he lodged at my brother's house at Barnstaple, he, being then married to my sister, got my brother's daughter with child, and I delivered her of a girl, which as soon as he had baptized, I pinched the throat of it, and strangled it ; and he smoked it over a pan of charcoal that it might not stink, and it was buried in the chamber of the house."—"Oh ! but, mother," replies young Mrs. Leaky, "there is nobody will carry me over ; for if any of our family or goods be in a ship, you appear and raise a storm, and they are all cast away." To this the spectre retorts, "Thou shalt go, and return again, in safety ; and I give thee thirty days for thy voyage : but see that thou deliver the message to the bishop that I have told thee." Upon this, the daughter takes heart, and speaks to her, "Pray, mother, where be you now, in Heaven or

in hell?" At which words the spirit looked very stern upon her, but gave her no answer, and immediately vanished out of sight, and never troubled her more.

A while after, her husband coming home, she relates to him all this dialogue, and the commission that was given her, and demands his advice in it, who tells her he would have her go ; but the young woman, before she would go for Ireland, consults some godly ministers about it, to whom she discovers all the aforesaid circumstances, and they considering the whole, advise her also to go over to Waterford. She crosseth over in the next ship, and goes strait to the bishop's palace, where she meets his lordship in the hall, and delivers him the message she was enjoined, who makes no other reply than this, "That if he was born to be hanged, he should not be drowned."

And she, not being invited to drink, or stay in the palace one night, takes the first opportunity of a ship sailing to Minehead, and returns home again in a very few days to her own house, and being known to be come back from Ireland, she is apprehended by a warrant from some justice of the peace, and brought to the sessions at Taunton ; and being examined, she gives this account to the bench which I have here written. Sir George Farrell, Knt. living at Hill Bishops, near Taunton, was one of the justices upon the bench ; Mrs. Bruin, a widow, one of his daughters was also present in court ; and she and Mr. Buckley, then a minister near Taunton (afterwards, when I was minister of Knightsbridge, he was rector of Thurlston in the South Hundred of Devon), heard the whole examination. From these two last persons, Madam Bruin and Mr. Buckley, I had this relation, and this circumstance more, that the justices having examined Mrs. Leaky on oath, sent her depositions up to Whitehall to the council table, in the reign of King Charles the First. But this deposition being no legal evidence or proof in law, the business was let fall, and the bishop (however he might be suspected) was not at all prosecuted at that time.

This narration is succeeded by another, relating to the same parties, and equally singular in its detail; but its length compels us to reserve it for a future number.

Interesting Varieties.

ENGLISH CIPHER.

THE following is the meaning of the Cipher. "Inscription for the Inside of a Book," printed in our 21st number:—

Reader, be thou grave or gay,
Peruse me through, I pray, with care;
My leaves deface not, that I may
Be lent again to one as FAIR.
Children and grease are both my dread,
Return me then as soon as read.

To the gentlemen who favoured us with solutions we are extremely obliged, particularly to Sedeboy, Ingenuus, Albion, D. B., D. Abel, Tyro, and Woodbury.

STANZAS,

WRITTEN BESIDE THE CRADLE OF
MY INFANT DAUGHTER. BY MRS.
CORNWELL BARON WILSON.

SWEET Florence! when I gaze on those
blue eyes,
And that soft cheek of infant gentleness,
All a fond parent's anxious cares arise,
And hopes and fears, which none but
mothers' hearts can guess!

As thus I bend me o'er that placid face,
And hang enraptured on that cherub
smile,
Fond, busy thought thy future hours
would trace,
And fancy plies her loom, and weaves
her web awhile!

Thy future life (that fearful, checquer'd
maze),
In dreaming thought, leads me thro'
many a scene;
With prophet glance, I look to distant
days,
And paint what thou may'st be, from all
that I have been.

The gay, light-hearted School-Girl, first
I see,
With cloudless brow, and soul devoid of
art;
All, all my earlier years reviv'd in thee,
And many a joy long past, comes rush-
ing o'er my heart.

The Maiden next, in blushing beauty
drest,
Whose graceful form, and heart-sub-
duing eyes,
And glowing cheek, and pure unsullied
breast
Half fearful, yet half fond, prompt
many a lover's sighs.

(Here my heart trembles for thee, my
sweet child!
And anxious muses on those dang'rous
hours,
When Love, beguiling Love! with wing
so wild,
First strews life's thorny path with his
enchanted flowers.

Blest season! when the young heart
learns to glow
With hopes, that love, and love alone
can feel;
Tho' oft the 'God of the unerring bow,'
Inflicts those fatal wounds, that Time
can never heal!)

The white-rob'd Bride I now behold
thee stand,
Within the sacred fane, where vows
are giv'n;
And plighted oaths are sworn;—when
heart and hand,
Tho' join'd by earthly ties, are regis-
ter'd in Heav'n!

The smiling Mother next, I see thee
move,
With looks of tenderness, and steps of
grace;
Around thee many a golden link of love,
And many a laughing eye, and plea-
sure-beaming face.

But all these dreams may fade;—Death's
with'ring hand,
That crops the flow'r, may blight thy
op'ning bloom;
And pale disease, with all its ghastly band
Of ill, may sweep thee hence, to an
untimely tomb!

Now sinks the vision from hope's dream-
ing eye,
And all the web delusive fancy wove,
At once dissolves before thy feeble cry,
And little upraised hands, that ask a
mother's love!

Whate'er thy lot may be,—whether the
way
Of life with flowers be strown—or
thorns o'errun,

Amid its storms or sunshine, may'st thou say,

To Him, who rules o'er all,—“thy will not mine, be done!”

TRANS-ATLANTIC VARIETIES.

[We have just been favoured, by our kind correspondent CLIO, with a large bundle of New-York newspapers, in which, among the innumerable advertisements with which the enterprising inhabitants of that commercial city crowd the columns, we have met with many interesting and amusing morsels of literature. A few of these we present to our readers.]

DRAMA.—The first tragedy performed in Boston was in 1750; the novelty made such a crowd and so much disturbance, that the legislature passed a law, prohibiting theatrical entertainments, as tending to unnecessary expense, the increase of impiety, and a contempt for religion.

ELEPHANTS—A gentleman from India assures us that he has seen elephants employed to pile wood, which have, after adding heap to heap, drawn back, and placed themselves in a situation to see if they have kept a perpendicular line and preserved a just level in their work, and have then corrected any perceptible defect in one or the other. The same person has seen two elephants employed to roll barrels to a distance; one has kept them in motion, while the other has been prepared with a stone in his trunk to stop their progress at the required spot!

HENRY SLEEPER is a stage driver, well known to many of the citizens of Philadelphia and Germantown, who travel between those places. For three and twenty years he has followed his present employment, most of which time he has been occupied in driving the Germantown stage; during this period he has passed over a space daily, including Sundays, of thirty miles—consequently he has rode two hundred and fifty-one thousand eight hundred and fifty miles, equal to going ten times

round the globe! And what is worthy of remark, he was never over-set but once, and that when turning a four horse stage in a narrow street in Philadelphia.

Henry is a man of temperate habits, cheerful disposition, obliging and kind, and those who know him, always prefer riding with him; and such is their confidence, that young children are frequently placed in the stage under his care, without parents or friends. He has a wife and five children, whom he supports comfortably.

DEGENERACY.—In a party of ladies, the conversation turned upon the fact, that females have many admirers, but few or no lovers. “Ah!” said a venerable old lady, who sat by, lamenting the degeneracy of times, “Courting is nothing now to what it was when I was young.”

ECCENTRIC NOTICE.—A paper of October 22, contains the subjoined hit at the filthy state of the streets, to which the corruption of the air and the consequent rapid spread of the late contagion were attributed. The Americans in this, as well as in many other matters, might advantageously take pattern from the English:—

“Any person in want of a DEAD PIE may find one that will probably answer his purpose in the middle of Broadway, between Broome and Spring-streets. Applicants need not be in any great haste, as it is expected he will lie there several days; and if the warm weather should last, and the carriages will let him alone, he will grow bigger and bigger.”

(Resumed at page 196.)

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—J. T. Woodbury, Felix, J. B., Simon, G. S. Willmer, and A Voice from a Nutshell. E. S. C. is not forgotten. Sedebay's Eulogy has been forwarded to its object. “The Stranger's Grave” shall appear. T. Hardy's letter is left, under cover for Abbasanza, at the printer's. A second Edition of No. 6 will be ready in a few days. Nos. 1, 2, 5, and 10 have been reprinted.

THE NIG-NAG;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 24.

SATURDAY, MAY 10, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it,"—SHAKESPEARE.



MURDER OF MR. PENNY.

In the black annals of crime and cruelty there occur few details of perfidy and deliberate villainy more extraordinary than the narrative of Mr. Penny's murder, at Clement's Inn, by his domestic, James Hall.

Hall, who was the son of a farmer in Hampshire, after passing his boyish days in the occupations of husbandry, repaired to London, where he lived for several years with a corn dealer, during which time his conduct was unexceptionable. On quitting this situation, he entered the service of Mr. Penny, a gentleman residing in chambers in Clement's Inn, of which he was what is termed the Principal. With him he lived seven years, and was highly esteemed by his master, who always treated him with great indulgence, and frequently presented him with sums of money beyond the actual amount of his wages.

In this service Hall remained seven years. At first he was extremely re-

gular in his deportment, but unluckily contracting some loose acquaintance, he became involved in debt, and in other respects greatly embarrassed in his affairs, having, it is said, married two women, in different quarters of the town, and living in daily dread of a discovery. Under these circumstances, he formed the determination to murder and plunder his master and quit England; and although several times when he had determined to effect his purpose his resolution failed him, he at length completed the barbarous deed on the 7th June, 1741.

Mr. Penny, who had been spending the evening with a friend, returned to his chambers about eleven at night; and Hall having, as was his custom, pulled off his coat, waistcoat, shoes, and stockings, the old gentleman was about to step into bed, when Hall knocked him down with a large bludgeon, which he had provided for the purpose. He repeated the blow seven

ral times, but his master, who had been stunned by the first stroke, neither sighed nor groaned, but remained in a state of insensibility.

This part of the tragedy being completed, Hall went into the dining-parlour, and completely divested himself of his apparel; after which he returned to the bed-room, and holding Mr. Penny's head over a chamber-pot, he cut his throat with a small clasp-knife. The blood that flowed from the wound he mingled with water, and poured down the sink; then, taking the body on his shoulders, he carried it, unobserved, to the privy of the inn, into which he threw it head foremost: but so bewildered were his ideas, that on his return to the chambers, as he afterwards declared, the whole inn appeared to be on fire.

His next care was to search his master's bureau, from which he took six-and-thirty guineas, and with this sum he determined to fly the country; but after wandering from place to place the whole of the following day, he returned in the evening to the inn, fancying that as the body was in so secret a place, his crime would never be discovered; and in the morning sent word to a Mr. Wooton, Mr. Penny's nephew, that his master had been two days from home, and he was therefore afraid some mischief had befallen him. Mr. Wooton, of course, was very particular in his enquiries upon the subject, but Hall gave him so many evasive answers, and betrayed so much confusion, that his suspicions were aroused, and he had him arrested; but, when brought before a magistrate, he denied all knowledge of his master's disappearance. He was, however, committed to Newgate, for trial, where he formed an ingenious plan for escaping, but his attempt being frustrated, he confessed his guilt, and at the next Old Bailey Sessions received sentence of death.

He was executed at the bottom of Catherine Street in the Strand, September 15, 1741; and afterwards hung in chains at Shepherd's Bush, on the road to Acton.

ANCIENT PUNISHMENTS.

OUR old chronicles afford many interesting and affecting particulars, which modern history excludes from its statements, as little consonant with the dignity of historical composition. Without admitting or questioning the propriety, on the whole, of this exclusion, we would observe, that it deprives history of much of its picturesque effect, and suppresses many of the peculiar characteristics of former ages. In the following account of the execution of some of the adherents of the unfortunate Richard II., we are led to lament that, though abrogated in practice, the legal license of such barbarities is still suffered to exist in our Statute Books. The particulars are extracted from MSS. in the King of France's library, examined and abridged by M. Gaillard and others.

“Richard II. was assassinated on Twelfth-Day in the year 1400. Various punishments were inflicted on such of his friends as were taken either in battle or in flight. Sir Thomas Blount, and one Bennet Selly, his companion, were drawn from Oxford (above three miles) to the place of execution, where they were hanged; but the ropes were soon cut, and these gentlemen were made to talk, and sit on a bench before a great fire, and the executioner came with a razor in his hand, and knelt down before Sir Thomas Blount, whose hands were tied, begging him to pardon him his death, as he must do his office. Then Sir Thomas asked him, ‘Are you the person appointed to deliver me from this world?’ The executioner answered ‘Yes,’ saying, ‘Sir, I pray you pardon me,’ and Sir Thomas kissed him, and forgave him his death. The executioner knelt down, and Sir Thomas made himself ready: and then the executioner opened his belly, and cut out his bowels strait from below his stomach, and tied them with a string, that the wind of the heart should not escape, and threw the bowels into the fire. Then Sir Thomas Blount was sitting before the fire, his belly open, and saw his bowels burning before him. Sir Thomas D’Ar-

peghen, King Henry's chamberlain, insulting Blount, said to him with derision, 'Go seek a master that can cure you.' Blount only answered by putting his hands together, saying, 'Te Deum laudamus, and blessed be the hour that I was born, and blessed be this day, for I shall die in the service of my sovereign Lord, the noble King Richard.'

Arpegghen wished to compel him to reveal the accomplices of his treason. 'The words traitor and treason,' said he, 'belong to thee and the infamous Rutland, by whom the flower of English chivalry is this day destroyed; I summon you both before the face of Jesus Christ, for your great treason against our Sovereign Lord, the noble King Richard.' The executioner then asked him if he would drink? 'No,' said he, 'you have taken from me the place into which I should put it. God be praised, my bowels are in the fire.' He afterwards entreated the executioner to deliver him from this world, saying, 'It hurts me much to see the traitors who are present.' The executioner then knelt down before him, and kissed him in a very humble manner, and soon after his head was cut off, and he was quartered.

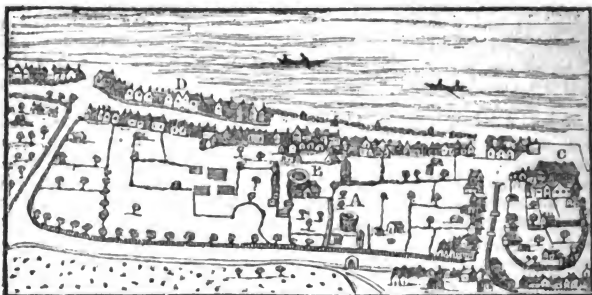
"The Earl of Huntingdon, King Richard's brother, fled into the county of Essex; but passing through a small village belonging to the Countess of Hereford, sister to the late Earl of Arundel, he was known and arrested. The Countess sent news of it to King Henry, desiring him to send her the young Earl of Arundel, her nephew, that he might enjoy the vengeance she was going to take on the man to whose counsels she principally attributed the death of her brother; which it appears she should rather have attributed to the treachery of the Earl of Nottingham. The young Arundel hastened thither, and loaded Huntingdon with reproaches. The Countess had assembled her vassals, to the number of eight thousand, and delivered to them the Earl of Huntingdon in chains, ordering them to cut him in pieces. The unfortunate man entreated for mercy, alledging that he had never done them any injury; and all took great

pity on him, except the Countess of Hereford and the Earl of Arundel. The Countess flew into a passion, exclaiming 'Curse on you all, villains! you have not the courage to put a man to death.'

"An Esquire offering himself for this purpose, advanced with his hatchet in his hand; but he was so touched with the tender complaints of Huntingdon, that he trembled for fear, and returned to the Countess with tears, saying, 'Madam, I would not put the Duke—(Huntingdon had been made Duke of Exeter by Richard)—to death for all the gold in the world.'—'Then,' said she, 'do what thou hast promised, or thy own head shall be cut off. When he heard this, he was so afraid, that he knew not what to do, and said, 'Sir, I entreat your pardon, forgive me your death.' He then lifted up his hatchet, and struck him so hard on the shoulder, that he made him fall with his face to the ground. The noble Duke leaped on his feet, saying, 'Alas, man, why do you treat me thus? For God's sake, kill me more easily.' He then gave him eight blows on the shoulder, for he could neither hit his neck or his head; the ninth stroke was in the neck; and the worthy Duke, brother to the noble King Richard, spoke yet, saying, 'Alas, dear friend, have pity on me, and free me from my pain.' The executioner then cut his throat with a knife, to separate his head from his body; and in this manner was the noble Duke put to death."

CORNISH SALMON.

We have Cockney prose-writers as well as Cockney poets, in abundance. One of the former has published in the London Magazine for May, a rigmale story, called "The Land's End, in Cornwall," which contains this passage:—"Their (the fishermen's) houses ran in a zig-zag line along the bosom of the bay, built of dry stone, covered with heath,—the roofs hung with dried SALMON."—I beg leave to inform this gentleman that no such fish as a salmon was ever caught near the coast of Cornwall, since the creation of the world. He wrote about the Land's End, but his ideas were wandering in Billingsgate. TRUTH.



ANCIENT AMPHITHEATRES ON BANKSIDE.

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE, SECTION 3.—This print, which includes precisely the same spot of ground as that in our 20th number, is given principally for the purpose of shewing the coincidence of the old Plans, and that the one cut may illustrate the correctness of the other. It is, however, copied from a Map of a later date than the corresponding view, viz. from one in Norden's "*Speculum Britannicæ*," published 1593, in which the building marked A is styled "The Play-house," it having been converted from a Bear-Garden into a Theatre subsequent to the appearance of the Plan from which the cut given with Section I was copied. Of this house, known by the name of the **GLOBE**, Shakspeare was part-proprietor; here his essays in acting were made, and here the principal number of his unequalled dramas were first performed. The building marked B is entitled "The Beare-House;" C denotes Winchester Palace, and D the Bankside. It will be seen that this plan, as well as the former, displays the square pools of water mentioned in Section I. Their use is explained by a passage in Brown's *Travels* 1656. He gives a view of the Bear-Garden at Dresden, which contains a pond, with several bears sporting in it, and says, "In the hunting-house in the old town, are 15 bears, very well provided for and looked unto. They have fountains and ponds to wash themselves in, wherein they much delight; and,

near to the pond are high ragged posts or trees set up, for the bears to climb up, and scaffolds made at the top, to sun and dry themselves; where they will also sleep, and come and go as the keeper calls them."

The building marked B. (in which Bull-baiting appears to have given place to Bear-baiting, between 1560 and 1593) was also converted into a Theatre towards the close of the 16th century, and called the **HOPPE**; but bear-baiting, and similar diversions, were carried on in the neighbourhood till about the reign of James the Second. The latest record extant, by which these diversions were legally authorized, is a grant to Sir Sanders Duncombe, dated Oct. 11, 1661, for "the practising and profit of the fighting and combating of wild and domestic beasts within the realm of England, for the space of fourteen years." Although the particulars of these sports do not strictly belong to a History of the Stage, yet as some of our earliest dramas were represented in buildings which had previously been devoted to such exhibitions, we shall add a few more words upon the subject, ere we commence our description of the legitimate Theatres.

The public were admitted to these Amphitheatres upon easy terms, for we are told in *Lambarde's "Perambulation of Kent,"* 1570, that they paid "one pennie at the gate,* ano-

* See Skelton's *Lines*, p. 154.

ther at the entrie of the scaffold, and a third for quiet standing." It was usual also for the keeper, preceded by a minstrel, to parade the streets with his animal, which generally bore a monkey on its back, like the dancing bears of our own days. Celebrated bears were complimented with the names of their masters. Thus in Shakspeare's time, a man at Paris Garden, named Seckerson possessed one, of which Slender, in the "Merry Wives of Windsor" says, "I have seen SECKERSON loose twenty times, and have taken him by the chain; but, I warrant you, the women have so cried and shrieked at it, that it passed: but women, indeed, cannot abide 'em." In the Comedy of the "Puritan," published 1607, mention is made of a bear named George Stone; and in the Duke of Newcastle's "Humorous Lovers," 1617, another is noticed, called Tom of Lincoln.

The combats, previous to the Revolution, appear to have been confined to beasts, for we do not meet in any old writer with the slightest hint that men took part in them; but after the Restoration of Charles the Second gladiatorial exhibitions were commenced, with others of the most cruel and disgusting description, as is shewn by the following paragraph extracted from a weekly publication called "Thompson's Loyal Protestant," April 8th and 15th, 1682:—

"London, April 7.—At the house on the Bankside, being His Majesty's Bear-Garden, on Wednesday, the 12th day of this instant April, at one of the clock in the afternoon, will be a horse baited to death, of a most vast strength and greatness, being between 18 and 19 hands high, formerly belonging to the Earl of Rochester, and for his prodigious qualittie in killing and destroying several horses, and other cattel, he was transmitted to the Marquiss of Dorchester; where doing the like mischiefs, and also hurting his keeper, he was sold to a brewer; but, is now grown so headstrong, they dare not work him; for he hath bitten and wounded so many persons (some having died of their wounds), that there is hardly any can pass the streets for

him, though he be fast tied, for he breaks his halter to run after them, though loaden with eight barrels of beer, either biting or treading them down, monstously tearing their flesh, and eating it, the like whereof hath hardly been seen: and 'tis certain the horse will answer the expectation of all spectators. It is intended for the divertisement of his Excellency the Embassadour from the Emperour of Fez and Morocco; many of the nobility and gentry that knew the horse, and several mischiefs done by him, designing to be present.

"London, April 15.—This day, the great horse mentioned in our last, being brought to the Bear-Garden, several dogs were set upon him, all which he overcame, to the great satisfaction of all the spectators. But, after a little time, a person resolving to save his life, and preserve him for another time, led him away, and being come almost as far as London Bridge, the Mobile then in the house cried out it was a cheat, and thereupon begun to untyle the house, and threatened to pull it quite down, if the horse were not brought again, and baited to death. Whereupon the horse was again brought to the place, and the dogs once more set upon him; but they not being able to overcome him, he was run through with a sword, and dyed. It was designed principally for the entertainment of his Excellency the Embassadour from the Emperour of Fez and Morocco, but by reason of bad weather, he was not there."

Such barbarous exhibitions as this could not be permitted under any form of government, without entirely brutalizing the manners of the people; the legal authorities therefore interfered, the amphitheatres were suppressed, and Bankside, which for two centuries had been the favourite resort of the idle and dissipated, has since been abandoned to the more orderly part of the community, engaged in manufactures and commerce.—(Section 4 on page 197.

ROB ROY.

In the list of Subscribers to "Keith's History of the Affairs of Church and

State in Scotland," published in Edinburgh, in 1734, there occurs amongst the names of a considerable portion of the nobility and gentry of the kingdom, that of "Robt. Macgregor, alias Rob Roy." It would thus appear that this well known freebooter was, at one period of his life, possessed of a degree of literary taste and knowledge. His son, Robert Macgregor, was hung in the Grass-Market, Edinburgh, 1753, for rape and murder. He acknowledged the justice of his sentence, and professed himself of the Roman Catholic faith.

Interesting Varieties.

MAGAZINE GLEANINGS.

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENT.—A printer at Paris wrote a tragedy, called "Joshua," which he printed in the most splendid style, and sent a copy to the celebrated Bodoni, a brother printer, at Parma. Some time after, he went into Italy, and paid Bodoni a visit. "Well," said he, "what do you think of my tragedy?" "Full of beauties," exclaimed his friend. "Then you think," rejoined the author, "I shall acquire some fame by it?" "It will immortalize you," was the reply. "And the characters, what do you say of them?" "The characters," cried Bodoni, "are exquisite, perfect—especially the CAPITALS. ("Lady's.")

DUTCH POETRY.—The following beautiful lines, we understand, are from the pen of H. S. Van Dyk, Esq. author of "Theatrical Portraits."

THE ROSES.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DUTCH
OF BILDERDIJK.

I saw them once blowing,
Whilst morning was glowing,
But now are their wither'd leaves strew'd
o'er the ground,
For tempests to play on,
For cold worms to prey on,
The shame of the garden that triumphs
around.

Their buds, which then flourish'd,
With dew drops were nourish'd,

Which turn'd into pearls as they fell
from on high;
Their hues are now banish'd,
Their fragrance all vanish'd,
Ere evening a shadow has cast from the
sky.

I saw, too, whole races
Of glories and graces
Thus open and blossom, but quickly decay;
And smiling and gladness,
In sorrow and sadness,
Ere life reach'd its twilight, fade dimly
away.

Joy's light-hearted dances,
And melody's glances,
Are rays of a moment—are dying when
born:
And pleasure's best flower
Is nought but a flower,
A vanishing dew-drop—a gem of the
morn.

The bright eye is clouded,
Its brilliancy shrouded,
Our strength disappears—we are help-
less and lone:
No reason avails us,
And intellect fails us,
Life's spirit is wasted, and darkness
comes on. ["LONDON."]

LORD ST. VINCENT, in 1770, was appointed to the command of the Alarm frigate of 32 guns, which, it may not be unamusing to remark, was the first ship in the British navy that was coppered, by way of experiment. In 1772, this vessel, which had suffered some damage on the rocks, sunk at her anchors in the harbour of Marseilles. This circumstance afforded the first opportunity of shewing the genius and peculiar character of the man. Calling his crew together, he said, "Gentlemen, we are in a foreign port; the Intendant has voluntarily promised me any number of men I may want for the purpose of raising the Alarm, which, however, I have declined; it is necessary HERE to shew what we are able to do: we must weigh our ourselves." He did not deceive himself—the Alarm was actually weighed, to the admiration of every body, by her own crew alone.—("LONDON.")

A PLEASANT CLIMATE—The fol-

lowing is the Calendar of a Siberian or Lapland year :—

June 23.—Snow melts.

July 1.—Snow gone.

— 9.—Fields quite green.

— 17.—Plants at full growth.

— 25.—Plants in flower.

August 2.—Fruits ripe.

— 10.—Plants shed their seed.

— 18.—Snow—continuing to June 23. ["London"]

ORANGES.—Dr. Webster, in his account of the island of St. Michael, states that, in the orange groves, every tree yields annually 6000 or 8000 oranges, and 26000 have been gathered from a single tree. The proprietors, to avoid the trouble of speculation, sell the produce to English or American merchants, whose agents travel about the country, purchasing all the fruit, even before it is ripe. Dr. Webster calculates the quantity annually exported at nearly 60,000 chests, and that remaining in the island at 30,000.—("Xn. Observer.")

BRIGHTON.—Some notion of what Brighton was within the memory of persons yet alive, may be formed from the fact, that a few months ago, a witness being called upon to say whether a certain passage in the town, at a period within his recollection, was or was not a way for horses, deposed that at the time spoken of there was but one horse in the town, and that was a mill-horse.—("M. Review.")—Compare Nic-Nac, No. 19, page 145.)

SWIFT.—In the Lansdowne library is a copy of Burnet's History, with marginal notes in Swift's hand-writing. Of these, which are extremely characteristic, we subjoin two or three specimens :—

BURNET, p. 28.—"The Earl of Argyle was a solemn sort of man, grave and sober, and free of all scandalous vices."—SWIFT.—"As a man is free of a corporation, he means."

BURNET, p. 163.—"Paradise Lost is esteemed the BEAUTIFULLEST and PERFECTEST poem that ever was writ, at least in our language."—SWIFT. "A mistake! for it is IN ENGLISH."

BURNET, p. 327.—"It seems, the French made no great account of their prisoners, for they released 25,000 Dutch for 50,000 crowns."—SWIFT. "What! ten shillings a-piece! By much too dear for a Dutchman."

BURNET, p. 700.—When I had the first account of King James the 2nd's flight, I was affected with this dismal reverse of fortune in a great prince; more than I think fit to express."—SWIFT. "Or than I will believe."—("B. Critic.")

ADVICE.

DETERMIN'D before hand, we gravely pretend

To ask the advice of an intimate friend. Should his sentiments differ, on any pretence,

We pity his want both of judgment and sense,

Put if he falls into, and flatters our plan, Why, really we think him a sensible man.

C. S.

SOLUTIONS TO ARTICLES,

IN NO. III. OF THE SPHINX, P. 175.

THE PUZZLE.

Tobacco! how shall I thy worth disclose,
Heightener of joy, and soother of our woes?

How to the world thy value shall I tell,
Within whose fumes such wond'rous virtues dwell,

All noxious humours from the head to clear,

And with delightful thoughts the heart to cheer?

FIRST ENIGMA.—The letter L.

SECOND DITTO.—An Old Maid.

FIRST CONUNDRUM.—Because 'tis an Attic story.

SECOND DITTO.—Because she was a great Polly Titian.

THIRD DITTO.—A re-bus.

FOURTH DITTO.—Because he's going to Bag-dad.

FIFTH DITTO.—Snuff the candle.

SIXTH DITTO.—Because she has seen a kid-napping.

SEVENTH DITTO.—A.—because it makes her heat.

The White Munchion.

RETORT COURTEOUS.—The first American vessel that anchored in the Thames after the separation of the Colonies from the mother country, naturally attracted a multitude of spectators, one of whom exclaimed in a contemptuous tone, "Whence come ye, brother Jonathon?"—"Straight from BUNKER'S HILL, d—n you!" retorted the boatswain.

TALLEYRAND.—Madame de Stael's daughter, the Baroness de Broglie, was extremely beautiful, and her charms made so deep an impression on Talleyrand, that in contemplating them, he was often deficient in his attentions to her highly-gifted mother, who, to confound him, put this question to him one day, during an aquatic excursion:—"If our vessel were wrecked, which of us would you first strive to save, me or my daughter?"—"Madam," replied Talleyrand, "blessed as you are with talents and acquisitions, it would be an insult to suppose you cannot swim; I should therefore deem it my duty to save the Baroness first." G. S.

NEGRO SHREWDSNESS.—During the American war an avaricious planter in Jamaica frequently curtailed his negro's weekly allowance of red herrings and Indian meal. The slaves more than once went in a body, and demanded the reason, but the constant reply from the overseer was, "The provision-vessels have been taken by American privateers. This satisfied them for some time; but at length being exhausted with long fasting, and tired of a repetition of the same story, one of the principal negroes, in the name of the rest, proposed the following question:—"Massa, de provisions taken ebry day by de 'Merican privateer; vy dey not take de vessels wid de grubbin-hoe and de pick-axe?"

DR. WILSON, the venerable Bishop of Sodor and Man, with an income of

£300 a year, sent for his tailor to make him a cloak, and desired it might have only one loop and button. The tailor submitted to his reverend customer, that if the fashion should become general the button-makers would starve. "Do you say so, William?" replied the Bishop, "then button it all over." G. S.

APT TITLE.—A Hampstead coachman, who drove two miserable hacks, styled his vehicle the *Regulator*. A brother whip called out the other day, while passing him. "I say Tom, don't you call your coach the *Regulator*?"—"Yes, I do," replied the other.—"Ay, and a devilish proper name it is," resumed Jehu.—"Why so?"—"Why, because all the other coaches go by it."

WHOLESOME ADVICE.—A forward young lady was walking one morning on the Steyne, at Brighton, when she encountered a facetious friend. "You see, Mr. ——" said she, "I am come out to get a little sun and air."—"I think, madam, you had better get a little husband first," was the reply.

MATRIMONIAL SERVICE.—A friend of mine, a cosey old bachelor, who has been looking into a prayer-book, says that the Matrimonial Service exactly resembles Matrimony itself, since they both begin with "Dearly Beloved," and both end with "Amazement."

CLARET V. PORT.—Home, the author of *Douglas*, held port wine in abhorrence. In his younger days claret was the only wine drank by gentlemen in Scotland. He wrote these four lines on the enforcement of the high duty on French wine in this country: "Firm and erect the Caledonian stood: Old was his mutton, and his claret good: 'Let him drink port,' an English statesman cried— He drank the poison, and his spirit died."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—T. A., B., Julio, J. W. Grange, & Senior. "Lines on my Infant Boy" next week.

THE NIC-NAO;

OR,

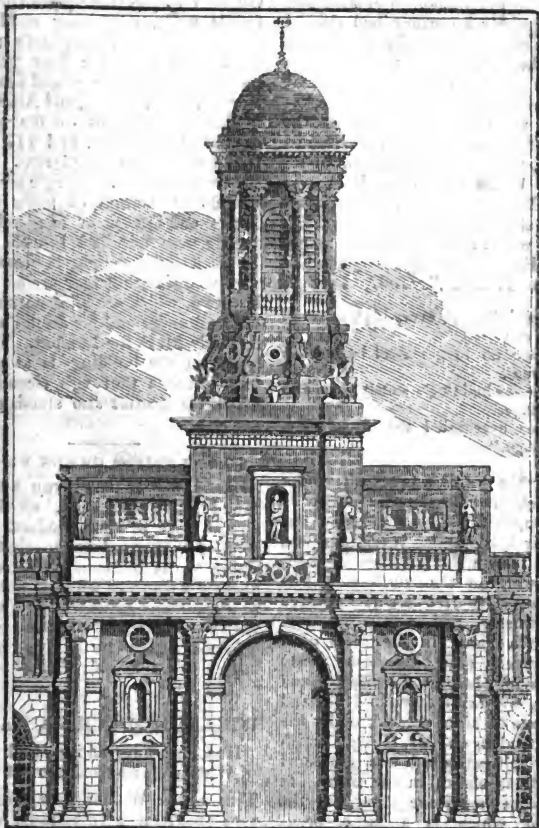
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 25.

SATURDAY, MAY 17, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



NEW ROYAL EXCHANGE.

WITH the name and recollection of England's trade must ever be connected its principal scene of activity, the Royal Exchange, a brief detail of the ancient state of which building will not, we presume, be an unacceptable

introduction to a detail of its modern improvements and recent alterations.

A few centuries since, the site of this centre of intercourse for the merchants of the earth, was occupied by a loathsome dungeon called the

TUN; and the citizens met to transact business under the canopy of heaven, in Lombard-street, till the year 1556, when the public-spirited Sir Thomas Gresham built a structure for the purpose, after the model of that of Antwerp. This was destroyed in the great Fire of London, when precisely a century had elapsed from its completion, and a M. Jorevin de Rocheford, an account of whose tour in England was published at Paris, in 1672, says, "it is remarkable that there remained entire only the statue of him who caused the edifice to be built, which received no kind of injury." When first opened, it was called Britain's Bourse, a title subsequently altered to that of the Royal Exchange, which circumstance is thus noticed in Heywood's Play of "Queen Elizabeth's Troubles," 1609, Part 2,

"Proclaim through every high street of the city,
This place no longer shall be called a Bourse;
But since the building's stately, fair, and strange,
Be it for ever call'd the Royal Exchange."

After the fire, it was rebuilt, under the direction of the trustees of Sir T. Gresham, by Nicholas Hawkes, a pupil of Sir Christopher Wren, and was opened for public business in 1669. The tower, on the south side, was of wood, 178 feet high, in three compartments, and was surmounted with a vane, in the form of a grasshopper, (the Gresham crest) but, having become dilapidated and ruinous, was taken down in 1819, and a new one of stone erected, under the superintendence of Mr. George Smith of Bread Street, which was completed in 1822, as shewn in our print. It consists of a square story, in the front of which is a niche, occupied by a full-length figure of Sir T. Gresham; and on the top, at each corner, is a griffin, sustaining in its fore-paw the Arms of the City of London. In the centre, on each side are placed busts of Queen Elizabeth. Above is an octagon (in which is the clock) having four faces to

the cardinal points, and over the octagon is a circular story, containing the chimes, surrounded by a colonnade of the Corinthian order. The whole is surmounted by a dome, and finished with a pedestal and vane, displaying the ancient symbol of a grasshopper. On each side of the square story are façade walls, containing emblematic representations of England's power, &c.; and over the four principal columns in front are placed figures of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America.

The measurement of the interior area is 144 feet long, and 117 broad, round which are noble piazzas. Above the arches of this quadrangle are niches containing statues of many of the Kings and Queens of England, with their names inscribed beneath them. In the walls of the piazza also are numerous niches, but they are all vacant but two, which are filled with statues of the founder and Sir John Barnard, formerly M. P. for London. The exterior of the building is at present undergoing a thorough cleansing, of which the interior also stands greatly in need.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NIC-NAC.

SIR,—I beg to hand you a thing I found in an old book, which may amuse some of your readers. I am fond of buying old books—but in addition to the Bibliomania, I have frequently a disorder which is not found to accompany many who are afflicted with that complaint—I have a remarkable inclination to read the books I buy. I am, Sir, &c. P.

OF A

WICKEDE MILCH WOMANNE.

How shee mingled her Milch with Watterre and what came of itte.

THE ould Womanne whomof wee arre spekinge keepit foure or five Cowes. Shee sould Milche about thee Towne, and somme of her Coustommars suspactinge thatte herre Milch was watterrede, toulde her honestelye thatte itte smackede of the Pumpe. Shee sayde itte was not trewe, but false ande scandelouse: and shee toke the Manne who hadde sayde

so before thee Maire, ande mayde Affidavit thatte shee never didde pompe into her Milch. Shee wasse watchette to the Pompe where bye shee lived, but neverre was shee scene to tak awaye more Watterre thanne was needfulle for her housolde Ewces. —Theree wasse, howsomeverre, a Brooke neere whereto shee was accustomed to passe, and shee was scene to putte her small Vessele or pinte Potte into the Streeme ande drawe out Watterre manie Times, the whilk shee potte into herre Milch, and set alle upon her Heide. Shee wasse accuscit concerninge thisse Thing, ande shee deniet it, sayinge, shee wisheit the Deevil moughte sende hisse Impes to saye to the whole of herre Coustommers that itte was—iffe itte wasse. Shee toke herre milch paille offe herre Heide, ande begonne to deliverre itte, when beholde the Neighbourres that stodde bye tellinge her of herre Wrongfulnessse, sawe that theree wasse in the Milche a Shoalle of littel Fishes, callede Stickle-bagges. Ande so the bigge Deivel hadde sente his Impes atte herre wishe, to confounde ande damne herre Trade. And may alle thatte putte Watterre in theyre Milch meete withe thee like Treatement.

BULL-BAITING.

SIR,—The sports of our ancestors, carried on in the Amphitheatres on Bankside, as described in your History of the Stage, were doubtless sufficiently barbarous, but I question whether their brutality ever equalled,—I am sure it never surpassed—that described in the following paragraph, which I cut from a newspaper of the year 1804:—

BULL-BAITING.—This practice, which, in our mind, would be “more honoured in the breach than the observance,” some days since involved Stamford in considerable confusion. After the mob had sated themselves with the cries and torment of the poor beast, pent up in St. George’s-street, they set him loose for the open country, as affording a wider field to

display the zeal and intrepidity of its pursuers. The animal took to the river, when a fellow, hot with liquor and exertion, plunged after him, but, from the sudden and intense cold, he sunk and perished: and during the pause which the accident excited, the bull escaped.

The Bury paper of Tuesday gives the following account of a Bull-bait:

“The poor animal (which was perfectly gentle) had been privately baited in the morning, and goaded with sharp instruments, in order to render him furious enough for public exhibition, when he was brought to the stake, baited by dogs, and more brutal men, till, in his agony and rage, he burst his tethers, to the terror of his tormentors, and the great danger of the peaceable inhabitants of the place, some of whom were obliged to shut up their shops. He was again entangled with ropes, and, monstrous to relate, his hoofs were cut off, and in this state he was again baited, feebly sustaining himself on his mangled bleeding stumps!!!”

STEAM VESSELS.

“It was not till 1818, that a Steam-Boat was made use of (in England) to perform regular voyages by sea. In that year, the *Rob Roy*, of ninety tons, built by Mr. Denny of Dumbarton, and with an engine of thirty-horse power, made by Mr. Napier of Glasgow, plied regularly between Greenock and Belfast, and proved the practicability of extending the use of the steam-engine to sea navigation.”—(Fifth Report Committee of the House of Commons, on Regulations for conveying the Mail between London and Dublin, 1822.)

TRANS-ATLANTIC VARIETIES, OR SELECTIONS FROM AMERICAN JOURNALS.

(Resumed from page 184.)

• **LONGEVITY.**—A respectable gentleman of Ohio gives us the following particulars respecting a poor old woman of his neighbourhood, named Ann

Baily:—"She cannot tell her age exactly, but believes that she was about 12 or 13 years old when Queen Ann of England died, after whom she was named. When about 49 years old, she emigrated to the United States, and now resides with her son who is an old man.—When the state of Virginia kept up a garrison at Ranawha, to defend the western country against the Indians, frequent attempts were made to force it by the savages, and at one time it became necessary to obtain a supply of ammunition. Ann volunteered to proceed to Greenbriar county (100 miles), through an entire wilderness; she left the fort in the night, on horseback, and returned with the ammunition; amidst the acclamations of the soldiery.—Being wretchedly poor, a petition was presented in her behalf to the legislature of Virginia, praying for a pension—a bill for the purpose passed the house of delegates, but the senate rejected it on general grounds—as establishing a precedent that might bear hard upon the treasury; so poor Ann has had to dwindle out a long life, dependent chiefly on the bounty of her neighbours; but she sometimes attends market with a few fowls, &c, making a journey on foot of about seven miles to dispose of her articles, which she carries on her back.

"When the N. W. army was at Fort Meigs, during the late war, Ann travelled on foot as far as Delaware, or Fort Stephenson, my informant could not certainly say which, to procure some situation in which she might be useful; but she could not find any employment, and returned home."

Queen Ann died in August, 1714; so Ann Baily, if the account be true, which we have reason to believe it is, must be about one hundred and twenty years old.—(New York Daily Advertiser, 24th October, 1822.)

A CALCULATION

of the Annual Consumption of the Necessaries of Life, in London.

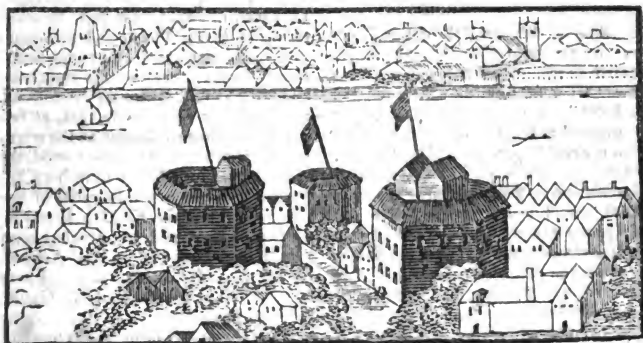
Bullocks	111,000
Sheep and Lambs	786,000
Calves	220,000
Hogs	220,000

Sucking Pigs	70,000
Gallons of Milk, the produce of 8,800 cows	708,000
Quarters of Wheat	810,000
Chaldrons of Coal	680,000
Barrels (36 gallons) of Ale and Porter	1,113,500
Gallons of Spirituous Liquors	11,146,783
Pipes of Wine	65,000
Pounds of Butter	16,800,000
Pounds of Cheese	21,090,000
Acres of Land cultivated in the vicinity of London, for vegetables	10,000
Do. for Fruit	4,800

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION.

London contains places of Worship	502
Churches, exclusive of one Cathedral and one Abbey	114
Chapels and Chapels of Ease	230
Meetings, & Dissenting Chapels	260
Chapels for Foreigners	43
Synagogues	6
Asylums for the Indigent	122
Asylums for the Sick & Lame	24
Friendly Societies	704
Dispensaries for the Poor	13
Persons committed, annually, for trial	2,500
Persons who rise every morning without knowing how to subsist during the day	20,000
Ale Houses	5,351
Servants at all times out of place	10,000
Annual Depredations	2,000,000l
Annual Charities in London and vicinity	750,000l
Poor Rate Expenditure for the year 1816	816,813l
Bank of England notes in circulation	18,500,000l
Of these in 1l. and 2l. notes *	5,500,000l
Yearly Produce of Landed Property, as stated in the House of Commons by Mr. King, in 1776	13,000,000l
The same as stated in the House of Commons by Mr. Pitt, in 1796	25,000,000l
Difference of the 2 statements	12,000,000l
Average value of the Exports and Imports of London	60,500,000l
Annual amount of the Customs	6,000,000l
(Resumed at page 222.)	

* This calculation was made two or three years since, before these notes were abolished.



THE GLOBE, ROSE, AND HOPE, THEATRES.

HISTORY OF THE THEATRES, SECTION 4.—We have now arrived at an epoch when the establishment of regular Theatres can be distinctly traced. The puritan Stubbes, in his "Anatomic of Abuses," 1583, thus quaintly reprobates them:—"Marke the flocking and running to Theatres and Curtens, daylie and hourlie, night and dave, tyme and tyde, to see Playes and Enterludes; where such wanton gestures, such bandie speeches, such laughing and sleering, such kissing and bussing, such clipping and culling, such winkinge and glancinge of wanton eyes, and the like, is used, as is wonderfull to behold."

Between this period and 1592, when Shakespeare commenced dramatic writer, there existed no less than eleven Theatres in London, though probably they never were all open at one time. They were

1. The Theatre Shoreditch.
2. The Curtain ibid.
3. The Globe Bankside.
4. The Rose ibid.
5. The Hope ibid.
6. The Swan ibid.
7. The Whitefriars.
8. The Blackfriars.
9. The Fortune Golden Lane.
10. The Cock Pit or Phoenix Drury Lane.
11. The Red Bull . . . St. John's Street.

The origin, &c. of these we shall describe in this, and subsequent Sections, of our History.

The first two stood in Curtain Road, Shoreditch. Stowe, in his Survey of London, says "there was formerly in this neighbourhood a famous well called Holy-Well,* and a very antient building, called The Priory of St. John the Baptist, which being pulled down on the suppression of Monasteries, &c. in the reign of Henry 8th., many houses were erected there, for the lodging of noblemen; and near thereunto are builded two public houses for acting Comedies, Tragedies, and Histories, whereof the one is called the CURTAIN, the other the THEATRE, both standing on the southwest side towards the fields." We believe no stage-historian has before correctly pointed out the situation of the latter house, about which there have been many discussions. Malone confesses that he was unable to ascertain its situation; Dr. Drake, in his "Shakespeare and his Times," without the slightest authority, supposes it to have been in Blackfriars; Mr. Haslewood, in the "Censura Literaria," suggests that it might have been in Shoe Lane; and Mr. Chalmers, still farther from the mark, asserts that it stood at Newington Butts. It is very remarkable that the above quotation from Stowe, which completely decides the question, should

* Holywell Lane still exists.

have escaped the notice of all these gentlemen.

"The 3d 4th and 5th of the Theatres in the preceding list, are represented in the above cut, copied from the "View of London as it appeared in 1599." They occupy the same spot of ground as the Amphitheatres shewn in our preceding prints. The **GLOBE**, which was converted from a Bear-Garden into a Theatre about the year 1590, stood nearly opposite the end of Queen Street, Cheapside, and was an hexagonal wooden building, partly open at the top, and partly thatched with reeds. The performances took place by daylight, and during the time of playing, a flag was displayed on the roof of this and other theatres, as represented in the accompanying view. About 1593, the proprietors, of whom Shakspeare became subsequently one, had the old edifice pulled down, and a more commodious Theatre erected, the contract for building which is still in existence, and is printed in Malone's History of the Stage. On St. Peter's day, June 29, 1613, the new house was entirely destroyed by fire, which arose as follows:—The players were representing Shakspeare's Henry the 8th. and on the King's entrance to the Masquerade, some cannon were discharged, the wadding from which fired the thatch. In the following year it was rebuilt with more splendour than it before could boast, which event was celebrated by Taylor, the Water Poet, in the following epigram:—

"As gold is better that's in fire tried,
So is the Bankside **GLOBE**, that late was
burn'd;

For where before it had a thatched hide,
Now to a stately Theatre 'tis turn'd:
Which is an emblem that great things
are won

By those that dare through greatest dangers run."

Our cut represents the Theatre previous to the conflagration. Performances were probably continued here till 1642, when the puritanical Parliament issued an order for suppressing all Plays. Its site is now occupied by Barclay and Perkins's brewery, formerly the property of Mr.

Thrale, Mrs. Piozzi's first husband. It is well known that a close intimacy existed between Thrale and Dr. Johnson, and hence the Doctor was accustomed to pass much of his time here, and at Thrale's house at Streatham. It is certainly remarkable that, at two periods of time so distant as the reigns of Elizabeth and George the 3d. the very same spot should have been honoured with the constant visits of two men so eminent in English literature as Shakspeare and his greatest commentator. Pennant, in his Account of London, 4to. 1791, says "I have been told that the door of the **GLOBE** was lately standing."

THE HOPE.—The purposes to which this building was originally devoted have been described in our former Sections. It was converted from a Bear-Garden into a Theatre towards the close of the 16th century, but was shut up, with all others, by order of Parliament, in 1642. Being included in the sale of Church Lands, January 14, 1647, it produced 1783l.15s. and was probably soon afterwards demolished.

THE ROSE was built before 1598, being mentioned by Taylor, the Water Poet, in his suit concerning the players published in that year. The Proprietor was one Philip Henslowe, and the performers, among other titles, were called The Lord Admiral's Servants; the whole of Marlowe's dramas were played here. In 1613 the house was shut up, and never again opened as a theatre. The exact period of its destruction is unknown. It stood near to the water side, and its site still retains, or did till very recently retain, the name of Rose Alley. Our cut will give the reader a very clear idea of the relative situations of these three Theatres. The building on the right is the **GLOBE**, that in the centre is the **ROSE**, and that on the left, the **HOPE**. The road from the Southwark Bridge intersects the sites of the **GLOBE** and **HOPE**.—(Resumed on page 213.)

Interesting Varieties.

BURNS.

SIN,—The following two pieces from

the pen of Burns, after he had accepted the office of Exciseman, are but little known, and may probably be gratifying to many of your readers.

CURIOSUS.

LINES WRITTEN ON A WINDOW AT
THE KING'S ARMS TAVERN,
DUMFRIES.

Ye men of wealth and wit, why all this
sneering
'Gainst poor excisemen?—Give the cause
a hearing.
What are your landlords' rent-rolls?—
taxing ledgers:
What premiers? what even monarchs?
mighty gaugers.
Nay, what are priests, those seeming
godly wise men?—
What are they, pray, but spiritual ex-
cisemen?

ANSWER TO AN INVITATION TO SPEND
AN HOUR AT A TAVERN.

The King's most humble servant, I
Can scarcely spare a minute;
But I'll be wi' ye, by an bye,
Or else the Deil is in it.

STANZAS,

TO MY INFANT BOY. BY MRS. CORN-
WELL BARON WILSON.

Sweet smiling Cherub! if for thee,
Indulgent Heaven would grant my
prayer;
And might the threads of Destiny
Be woven by maternal care;
No golden wishes THERE should twine,
If thy life's web was wrought by me;
Calm peaceful pleasures should be thine,
From grandeur and ambition free!

I would not ask for courtly grace
Around thy polish'd limbs to play,
Nor Beauty's smile to deck thy face,
(Giv'n but to lead some heart astray.)
I would not ask the wreath of Fame
Around thy youthful brow to twine;
Nor that the Statesman's envied name,
And unsel'd honours should be thine!

Ne'er may War's crimson'd laurels bloom,
To crown thee with a Hero's wreath;
(Like roses smiling o'er a tomb,
Horror and death lie hid beneath.)
Nor yet be thine his feverish life,
On whom the fatal Muses smile;
The Poet, like the Indian wife,
Oft lights his own funereal pile!

No!—I would ask that Virtue bright
May fix thy footsteps ne'er to stray;
That meek Religion's holy light
May guide thee through life's desert
way.

That manly sense, and purest truth,
(A breast Contentment's chosen shrine.)
May through the slippery paths of youth,
Unstained, untarnish'd, still be thine!

That Love's chaste flame,—that Friend-
ship's glow,
May kindle in thy gen'rous breast;
That Peace (which greatness ne'er can
know),
Be thy calm pillow's nightly guest.
Sweet smiling Infant! if for thee
Indulgent Heav'n would hear my
prayer;

Thus, should the web of Destiny
Be woven by a Mother's care!

RHYMES TO THE EYE.

SIR,—Under the above title, there is an article in No. 3 of the "Liberal," which I have heard highly commended for ingenuity and originality. Its ingenuity I shall not question, but its originality I deny. It is completely disproved by the following lines, composed upon precisely the same plan, and published under the same title, which I transcribe from the "Morning Post" of November the 14th, 1821.

TRUTH.

"Husband (says Joan), 'tis plain enough
That Roger loves our daughter;
And Betty loves him too, although
She treats his suit with laughter.
For Roger always hems and coughs,
While on the field he's ploughing;
Then strives to see between the boughs,
If Betty heeds his coughing."

=====
The Wit's Nunchiou.
=====

QUATRAIN.—The following lines for a monument proposed to be erected to the memory of Messrs. l'Abbe de l'Epee, Sicard, Hauv and Berard, who severally distinguished themselves by devising means to relieve their fellow-creatures afflicted with the loss of Speech, Limbs, Hearing, and Sight, have much point:—

Ce que dicte le Muet,
Le Manchot peut l'ecrire;

Puis le Sourd if l'entend,
Et l'Aveugle peut le lire.

ROWLAND HILL hearing a pedant contend that H is no letter, but a mere aspiration, insisted upon its being to all intents and purposes a letter; observing that if it were not, it would be a very serious thing to him, as it would occasion his being **ILL** all his life.

NO TREASON.—A French officer was arrested for using seditious expressions. On his examination he was asked, "Did you not say that a new Prince was about to mount the throne?"—"Yes, I did."—"And did you not, by this false intelligence, stir up and inflame the people?"—"By no means; on the contrary, they all seemed to be perfectly contented."

BULL.—An Irish gentleman had a small cabinet of paintings, which several persons once applied to view at the same time. "Faith, gentlemen," said he, "if you all go in, it won't hold you."

COOKE was one evening very merry at a tavern, when **Incedon**, coming in, was requested by the tragic hero to sing "The Storm," but it being late, he refused, and retired to bed. Irritated at this, **Cooke** determined to be revenged, and after musing for a few minutes, asked the masters and waiters if they knew the man who had just been sitting in the same box with him. They replied, it was **Mr. Incedon**. "No such thing," exclaimed **Cooke**, "'tis some vile impostor, for he has stolen my watch and notes, and I insist for an officer being sent for, that we may search him." Remonstrance was fruitless, so at length the guardian of the night was summoned, and they all ascended to **Incedon's** chamber, with **Cooke** at their head. **Charley**, roused from his first sleep, asked what they wanted, **Cooke** insisted that he was the man who had the **NOTES**; at the same time observing "If 'tis really **Ince-**

don, he can sing 'The Storm!' let him do so, and I shall be convinced of my error." **Incedon** now perceiving the drift of the joke, without farther preface, addressing himself to **Cooke**, struck up "Cease rude Boreas," and having gone through the ditty, the party left him once more to his repose.

ANACHRONISM.—During **Young's** engagement at Bath in the winter of 1820-21, "Henry 8th" was revived, to exhibit him in the character of **Wolsey**. The representative of one of the Bishops, fancying, I suppose, that snuff-taking was a distinguishing characteristic of the character he personated, indulged his nose freely throughout the play, forgetting that the scene was laid at a period of nearly fifty years before tobacco was ever brought to England.

FRENCH REVENGE.—A Frenchman lately visited London, and took up his residence with a family in the neighbourhood of Brunswick Square. A few evenings after his arrival, he rode on horseback along the New Road; and, on reaching the Turnpike at **Battle Bridge**, was stopped by the gate-keeper, who demanded from him a toll of one penny. Monsieur, not comprehending the meaning of this exaction, remonstrated strongly against it, and for some time refused to submit; but, at length, finding his eloquence was of no avail, he threw down the penny in a passion, exclaiming vehemently, "Dere is your monie, sare; and, to ponish you, I vil not come through your pike again dis day!"

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—**Edward, J. K.**, *Curiosus* (April 1 and 30), **T. V.**, *Abbas-tanza*, and **Joe**. A letter for **Clio** lies at the printer's. Some of the lines quoted by **W. S.** are not sufficiently familiar, but the idea is excellent.

ERRATA.—Page 142, col. 2, line 2, add "and **Lord B.'s** amongst the number."—Page 183, column 1, line 16, for "both," read "most."

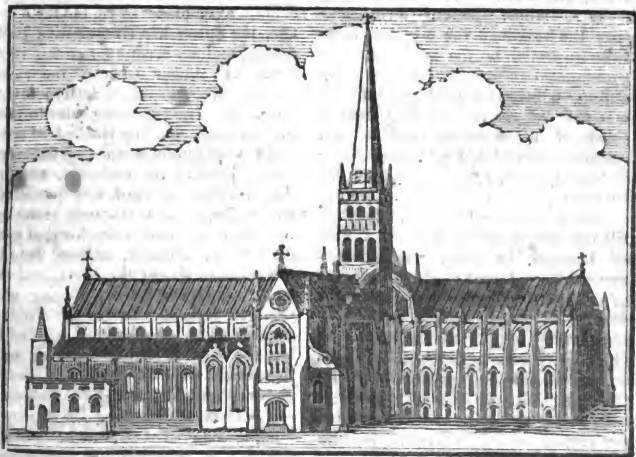
THE NIC-NAG; OR, ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 26.

SATURDAY, MAY 24, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Meritown it,"—SHAKSPEARE.



ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, 1560.

This cut is accurately copied from a valuable plate, representing the Southern aspect of the old Cathedral Church of St. Paul, as it appeared previous to the destruction of the spire by lightning in the year 1561.

At what period, and by whom, a church was first erected on this spot, is quite uncertain, though some fanciful writers, without much regard for probability, have conjectured that St. Paul himself visited Britain, and established a place of worship on the site. "The Christian faith," say they, "was very early embraced in this country; and, without resorting to idle monkish fictions, there is authentic testimony of a Church having been planted here by the Apostles: is it therefore unlikely that the religious zeal of St. Paul himself, who spent eight years in preaching in the Western Countries, might have impelled him to visit this island?"

The site was formerly that of a

Roman Pretorian Camp, and the first fabric was demolished during the great and general persecution under Dioclesian, who issued an edict, commanding that all Christian Churches in the Roman Provinces should be pulled down. It was re-edified upon the old foundation, in the time of Constantine, and afterwards destroyed by the Saxon Pagans; who, however, established it again, when they embraced Christianity, in Ethelbert's reign, Anno 608. In the year 961, the church, which was but a small wooden building, was destroyed by fire, but rebuilt in the same year, and probably with similar materials, since the restoration was so speedily effected.

New disasters awaited the holy pile. In 1086 a tremendous fire laid waste not only the cathedral, but also the greater part of the city; when Maurice, Bishop of London, determining to re-establish it in a more splendid and durable style than had previously

been effected, obtained from the Crown a grant of the old stone of the Palatine Tower, a spacious Castle standing at the entrance of Fleet River, which had been damaged by the fire; though other accounts say that the stone made use of was brought from Caen, in Normandy. On clearing away the ruins, previous to commencing the building, the site was carefully inspected by the surveyor, who pronounced an opinion that the foundation, which remained undamaged, was that of the original building: it consisted of Kentish rubble-stone, skilfully consolidated with prodigiously hard mortar, and far surpassed the superstructure in durability.

The building now raised, remained till the occurrence of the great Fire of London, in 1666, which swept away this, and most other monuments of metropolitan grandeur. It will be seen by the print prefixed to the present article, that it was in the Gothic style, with pointed arches, and was unquestionably a very superb structure. It did not, however, arrive at once at the maturity of its splendour. For various additions were made from time to time, and the spire was not completed before 1221. It was then surmounted by a ball, which, according to the old chroniclers, was sufficiently capacious to hold ten bushels of grain.

The church experienced several casualties before its complete destruction, in 1666, the most memorable of which are the following:—

First February, 1444, about two o'clock in the afternoon, says Stow, the lofty steeple was fired by lightning, which, by the laudable assiduity of the citizens, was soon seemingly extinguished; but, to their great surprise and terror, it broke out again, about nine at night, with redoubled fury, till, by the indefatigable pains of the Lord Mayor and citizens, it was effectually overcome. The damage, however was not completely repaired till 1462, when the ball was replaced by a gilt eagle.

Fourth June, 1561, about four o'clock in the afternoon, lightning again struck the spire, and burned it

down, with great part of the roof; though Heylin asserts that "an ancient plumber at his death confessed that the fire was not occasioned by lightning, but by his carelessness, in leaving a pan of coals and other fuel in the steeple, while he went to dinner." Be this as it might, great exertions were made to repair the damage, the queen herself granting 1000 marks, and a warrant for cutting 1000 loads of timber out of the royal forests. She also sent letters to the Lord Mayor, enjoining him to take measures for effecting the desired end; and the citizens contributing liberally, nearly 7000*l.* were collected, and by April, 1566, the roof was perfected, but nothing done towards restoring the spire. Subscriptions for that purpose were, however, entered into in the reign of James the First, and the work being carried on during nine years of that of Charles the First, a small part of the steeple was rebuilt; but the great rebellion breaking out, the repairs were discontinued, though above 100,000*l.* had been collected for the purpose of defraying the expenses. During the civil wars, the body of the church was converted into stables, and the portico at the western front was fitted up with shops.

After his Restoration, Charles the Second issued Letters Patent for the complete repair of the Cathedral, and the work was continued with spirit, till the great fire of 1666, which almost totally destroyed the building. A survey of the ruins was taken by Sir Christopher Wren, and attempts were made to fit up a temporary place of worship, but after two years had been spent to little purpose, the design was abandoned, and preparations made for erecting a new edifice. The rubbish was completely cleared away by April, 1674, and on the 21st of June, 1675, the first stone was laid by Mr. Strong, the chief mason-employed on the building, which was completed in 1711.

COLONEL BLOOD.

[The annals of History record few enterprises so daring as the attempt of Thomas Blood, generally called Colo-

nel Blood, to steal the Crown from the Tower, in the reign of Charles Second. A more resolute and determined adventurer than Blood never existed, and had his pursuits possessed a laudable object, he would have ranked with the most celebrated heroes in point of courage and skill. It has been truly, though somewhat quibblingly observed, that Cromwell himself enjoyed not higher requisites for earning a great name, and certainly did not approach so near to the possession of the Crown, as this most desperate of rogues. Blood's history is of itself highly exciting, but it has lately acquired new interest from his introduction in the novel of "Peveril of the Peak." Our readers therefore will not be sorry to be presented with the following circumstantial account of his career.]

Thomas Blood was, according to some accounts, the son of a blacksmith in Ireland; but, from other evidences, I rather conclude his father to have been concerned in iron-works, and to have acquired an easy fortune in that kingdom, to the prospect of which this man was born, and so might be said to come into the world a gentleman. He visited England while a very young man, and married, in Lancashire, the daughter of a person of good character in that county; this seems to have been in 1648, for he was in England when Col. Rainsford was killed at Ponterfract. Here turned after into Ireland, and served as a lieutenant in the parliament forces, and obtained a certain quantity of land assigned him for his pay; besides which, Henry Cromwell, when he governed that country, had so good an opinion of him, as to put him into the commission of the peace, though scarcely two and twenty years of age. These favors, and the nature of his education, gave him such an inclination to these sort of people as was not to be removed; and, after the king's restoration, there happened some accidents which tended to increase his dislike to the government. The act of settlement in Ireland affected him deeply in his fortune, which easily drew him to turn his thoughts any way that promised redress.

Here it may be observed that there were two distinct designs on foot in

1663; the one a general insurrection, the other the surprising the Castle of Dublin. The latter was indeed only a branch of the former, but different persons were concerned in them, only Blood embarked in both.—The design was not ill laid. Several persons, with petitions in their hands, were to wait within the castle, as if they staid to present them to the lord lieutenant; and about fourscore old, daring, disbanded soldiers were to stay on the outside, dressed like carpenters, smiths, shoemakers, and other mechanics. As soon as the lord lieutenant went in, a baker was to pass by the main guard, with a large basket of white bread on his back, which, by making a false step, he was to throw down, thus create a scramble amongst the soldiers, and offer the fourscore men aforementioned an opportunity of disarming them, while the others, with petitions in their hands, secured all within; and, being once masters of the castle and the Duke of Ormond's person, they were to publish their declaration. But the plot being discovered, the principal conspirators were seized about twelve hours before the time appointed for the execution of the design, in which no less than seven members of the House of Commons were concerned.

Blood's brother-in-law, one Lackie, who was embarked in the business, was, with many others, tried, convicted, and executed; but Blood himself made his escape, and kept out of reach, notwithstanding the Duke of Ormond laboured to have him secured, and a proclamation was published, promising an ample reward for apprehending him. He fled to England, and had not been long in this kingdom before he performed a fresh exploit, which was as extraordinary, more successful, and made much greater noise in the world than any thing he had previously done. Captain Mason, a person for whom he had a particular friendship, was to be removed from London to one of the northern counties, to take his trial at the assizes; and was sent down with eight of the duke's troops to guard him, who were reckoned very courageous. Blood, having notice of this journey, resolved to rescue his friend.

The prisoner and his guard went away in the morning; and Blood, having made choice of three acquaintance, set forward the same day at night, without boots, upon small horses, and their pistols in their trousers, to prevent suspicion. But opportunities are not always to be had, neither were all places convenient, so that the convoy and their prisoner were a good way beyond Newark, before Blood and his friends had any scent of their movements. At one place they set a sentinel to watch their coming by; but whether out of fear, or that the person was tired with tedious expectation, he brought them no tidings either of the prisoner or his guard, insomuch that Blood, and his companions, began to think their friend was so far before them upon the road, that it would be in vain to follow him; and yet not willing to give over an enterprise so generously undertaken, they rode on, though despairing of success, till, finding it grow towards evening, and meeting with a convenient inn upon the road, in a small village not far from Doncaster, they resolved to lie there all night, and set off for London the next morning. They had not sat long, condoling among themselves the ill success of such a tedious journey, and the misfortune of their friend, before the convoy came thundering up to the door, with their prisoner. There Blood, unseen, had a full view of his friend, and the persons he had to deal with. He had bespoke a small supper, which was at the fire, but finding that Captain Mason's party did not intend to alight, he gave directions to his associates to follow his example in whatever they saw him do. In haste therefore they called for their horses, and threw down the money for their reckoning, telling the woman of the house, that, they were resolved to go forward. Captain Mason went off first upon a sorry beast, and with him the commander of the party, and four more; the rest stayed behind to make an end of their liquor. Then away marched one more singly, and in a very short time after, the last two. By this time, Blood and one of his

friends, being horsed, followed the two that were hindmost, and soon overtook them. These four rode some little time together, Blood on the right hand, and his friend on the left. But, upon a sudden, Blood laid hold of the reins of the horse next him, while his friend did the same on the other hand; and, having presently dismounted the soldiers, pulled off their bridles, and sent them to pick their grass where they pleased. These two being thus disposed of, Blood pursued his game, intending to reach the single trooper; but he being got to the rest of his fellows (now reduced to six, and a barber of York that travelled in their company), Blood made up, heads the whole party, and stops them; upon which, some of the foremost, looking upon him either to be drunk or mad, thought the rebuke of a switch sufficient chastisement of such presumption, which they exercised with more contempt than fury, till he gave them to understand he was not in jest, but in very good earnest. He was soon seconded by his friend; but there had been several rough blows dealt between the unequal number of six to two, before Blood's two other friends came up to their assistance; nay, I may safely say seven to two, for the barber of York, whether out of natural propensity to the sport, or that his pot-valiantness made him so generous as to help his fellow travellers, would needs shew his valour at the beginning of the fray, but better had he been at the latter end of a feast; for though he was so prudent as to join the stronger side, yet because he would take no warning, which was often given him, not to put himself to hazard by meddling in a business that nothing concerned him, they were forced to dispatch him for giving them a needless trouble. By this time the other of Blood's friends being come up, the skirmish began to be very smart, the four assailants having singled out their champions as fairly and equally as they could. Captain Mason, who had rode before, wondering his guard came not with him, looked back, and observing a confusion, knew not

what to think; he conjectured at first that the troopers designed to tempt him to escape, which might afterwards prove more to his prejudice; therefore, unwilling to undergo the hazard of such a trial, he went back, when Blood cried out to him, 'Horse, horse, quickly!' At first, he could not believe it to be his friend's voice; but, as the thoughts of military men are soon summoned together, the captain presently joined in the combat for his own self-preservation. In this bloody conflict, Blood was three times unhorsed, and at length compelled to fight it out on foot; of which two of the soldiers taking advantage, singled him out, and drove him into a courtyard, where he made a stand with a sword in one hand and a pistol in the other. One of these soldiers shot him near the shoulder-blade of his pistol arm (at which time he had four other bullets in his body, that he had received before), then slung his discharged pistol at him with such good aim, that he hit him just between the eyes, which so stunned him, that he gave himself over for a dead man; yet resolving to give a deadly blow before he expired, with one vigorous stroke of his sword he brought his adversary from his horse, and laid him, in a far worse condition than himself, at his feet. Then, full of anger and revenge, he was just going to make an end of his conquest by giving him a fatal stab, but that in the very nick of time Captain Mason coming up, bid him hold, and spare the life of one that had been extremely civil to him upon the road; which Blood easily consenting to, by the assistance of the captain, the other soldier was soon mastered, and the victory, after a sharp fight that lasted above two hours, was at length complete. Two of the soldiers, besides the barber, were slain upon the spot, three unhorsed, and the rest wounded: and it was observable, that though the encounter happened in a village, where a great number of people were spectators, yet none would venture in aid of either party, not knowing which was in the wrong or which in the right, and were therefore

wary of being arbitrators in a desperate contest, where they saw the reward of assistance to be nothing but present death. After the combat was over, Blood and his friends divided and journed several ways.—(Resumed on page 210.)

VIN ORDINAIRE.

SIR,—I have just finished reading "Quentin Durward," and beg to offer you a comment upon a passage in the introduction. The author, speaking of the French wines, observes:—

"My mother's son cannot delight in thin potations; and in these days, when malt is to be had for nothing, I am convinced that a double straike of John Barleycorn must have converted the poor domestic creature, small beer, into a liquor twenty times more generous than the acid unsubstantial tippie, which here bears the honoured name of wine, though in substance and qualities much similar to Seine water."

He means Vin Ordinaire, so often mentioned by Cockney tourists in France, and which, in that country, constitutes the drink of the common people, as beer does in ours. Allow me to present you with a receipt for composing this invigorating beverage, which, to such of your readers as wish to drink French wines at a cheap rate, will form a very acceptable present:—Pour one glass of good old crusted Port into a quart bottle, add thereto a pint and three quarters of spring water, shake the mixture well, and the thing is done.

PROBATUM EST.

GRAYS-INN LANE,
MAY 19.

Interesting Varieties.

ODD YEAR.—The year 1818 was a kind of Annus Mirabilis. The amount of all the figures together was eighteen, which was also the sum ex-

pressed by the first two, as well as the last two, -and also reckoned singly, either forwards or backwards: an arithmetical combination which can never happen again.

ST. PANCRAS.—The history of the old church of St. Pancras is not a little singular. It is one of the oldest churches in Middlesex, and the parish it belongs to is one of the largest, being eighteen miles in circumference. The name was sent from Rome, by the Pope, expressly for this church, which has the only general Catholic burial-ground in England, and mass is daily said at St. Peter's at Rome for the repose of the souls of the faithful whose bodies are deposited therein. It was also the last church in England whose bell tolled for mass, or in which any Catholic rites were celebrated.

EULOGY ON RUM.

ARISE! ye pimpled tippling race, arise!
From ev'ry town and ev'ry village
come!

Shew your red noses and o'erflowing
eyes,
And help to chaunt the praise of potent
Rum!

The cordial drop, the morning dram I
sing,
And mean to paint their charms—like
anything.

Hail, mighty Rum! and by this general
name

I also laud wine, whiskey, gin, and
brandy;

[The kinds are various, but the effect
the same,

And so I choose a name that's short
and handy:

For, reader, know, it takes a deal of
time

To make a crooked word lie smooth in
rhyme.]

Hail, mighty Rum! thy song-inspiring
merit

Is known to many a bard in these our
days;

Apollo's drink, they find, is void of spirit,
Mere chicken-broth—insipid as their
lays;

And, pleas'd, they'd give a riv'let—ay, a
sea

Of tuneful water, for one quart of thee.

Hail, mighty Rum! to thee the wretch-
ed fly,

And find a sweet oblivion of their woes;
Lock'd in thy arms, as in the grave, they
lie,

Forget their kindred, and forgive their
foes.

And Lethe's stream [so much extoll'd by
some,

In ancient time], I shrewdly guess was
Rum.

Hail, mighty Rum! what can thy pow'r
withstand?

E'en lordly Reason flies thy dreadful
face;

And health, and joy, and all the lovely
band

Of social virtues, shun thy dwelling-
place:

(For, in whatever breast it rears its
throne,

Like Turkish monarchs, Rum must
rule alone.)

But, lo! th' ingratitude of Adam's race,
Though all these clever things to Rum
we owe,

Gallons of ink are squirted in his face,
And his poor back is bruised with many
a blow.

Some hounds of note have rang his fune-
ral knell,

And ev'ry puppy joins the general knell.

So have I seen (the simile is fine,
And wonderfully pat, tho' rather old),

When rising Phoebus shot his rays be-
nign,

A flock of sheep come skipping from
the fold;

Some restless wretch cries "baa," and
all the throng,

Ewes, rams, lambs, wethers, bellowing
pour along.

But, fear not, Rum! tho' fiercely they
assail,

And none but I, thy bard, thy cause
defend;

Think not, thy foes, tho' num'rous, shall
prevail,

Thy pow'r diminish, or thy being end:
Tho' spurn'd from table, and the public
eye,

In the snug closet safely shalt thou lie.

And oft, when Sol's proud chariot quits
the sky,

And humbler Cynthia mounts her one-
horse chair,

To that snug closet shall thy vot'ry fly,

And, rapt in darkness, keep his orgies
there;
Lift the full bottle, joyous, to his head,
Then, great as Cæsar, reel sublime to
bed,
BANTAIN.

SONG

FROM "QUENTIN DURWARD."

Ah! County Guy, the hour is nigh,
The sun has left the lea,
The orange flower perfumes the bower,
The breeze is on the sea,
The lark his lay, who trill'd all day,
Sits hush'd his partner nigh;
Breeze, bird, and flower, they know the
hour,
But where is County Guy?

The village maid steals thro' the shade,
Her shepherd's suit to hear;
To beauty shy, by lattice high,
Sings high-born Cavalier.
The star of Love, all stars above,
Now reigns o'er earth and sky,
And high and low the influence know,
But where is County Guy?

PERONE, situated upon a deep
river, in a flat country, and surround-
ed by strong bulwarks and profound
moats, was accounted in ancient, as
in modern times, one of the strongest
fortresses in France. Indeed, though
lying on an exposed and open frontier,
it never was taken by an enemy, but
preserved the proud name of Peronne
la Pucelle, until the Duke of Welling-
ton, a great destroyer of that sort of
reputation, took the place in the me-
morable advance upon Paris in 1815.
("Quentin Durward," Vol. 3, p. 33.)

NEWSPAPER

CROSS-READINGS.

Yesterday, a young man, for a trifling
wager, undertook to eat six
pounds of beef-stakes and a bushel of
potatoes, within an hour—and imme-
diately burst with a frightful explo-
sion.

A gardener, near Fulham, lately
cut an amazing large pumpkin, weigh-
ingly 86 lbs.—he fell a sacrifice to his
exertions.

A Greenwich coach was last night
overturned near London Bridge—
when the company separated, highly
delighted with their evening's amuse-
ment.

Yesterday was married, at St. Pan-
cras new church, Mr. Simpkins—luna-
cy is stated to have been the cause of
this rash act.

On Tuesday evening a new tragedy
was presented—it happily missed fire,
and the villains made off.

The Duke of York last night left
Town for Windsor—and though im-
mediately pursued he made his escape,
taking with him five shillings' worth
of halfpence, and a quantity of to-
bacco.

An Evangelical preacher was lately
found dead in a house of ill-fame—
whither he went for recovery of his
health.

The Drury-lane company have re-
vived the opera of the "Travellers"
—which they performed with ease in
three hours and fifteen minutes.

By private letters from Paris we
learn that his majesty Louis 18th—is
as ladies wish to be who love their
lords.

It is whispered that Mr. Murray
has given Lord Byron 4000 guineas
for the copyright of his—Lines to Mr.
Richard Turner, on his Incomparable
Blacking.

Advices from Corfu announce that
the Greeks, after several hours hard
fighting, have succeeded in taking—six
large boxes of Hickman's Diuretic
Pills.

H. R. H. the Duke of Sussex
opened the ball with—a person living
in an airy situation, who wishes for
two or three families' washing.

We have authority to state, that
Mr. Ex-Sheriff Parkins—is desirous
of procuring a situation as wet-nurse
in a regular family. **FRISK.**

DIMINUTIVE WRITING.—Sir, the
name of the author from which the
anecdote upon this subject, at p. 167,
was quoted, is I think wrongly stated:
instead of Howes should it not be
Stowe? The same writer records
the following:—

About the year 1576, Marke Sca-
liot, blacksmith, borne in London,
for trial of workmanship, made one
hanging Locke of yron, steele, and
brasse, a pipe key filed three square,
with a pot upon the shafte, and the

bowe with two esses, al cleane wrought, which weied but one grain of golde, or wheate corne: he made also a chain of golde of 43 links, to which chaine the locke and key being fastned, and put about a flea's neck, shee drew the same; all which locke, key chaine, and flea, weied but one graine and a half."

J. K.

THE NEW DROP, as it is still called, though its novelty has long been faded, was invented about five years ago, by one Deacon Brodie, a carpenter of Edinburgh, who, strange to say, was the first sufferer by his commodious gallows, being hanged for robbing the Excise Office. His friends had a notion that the new machine would not prove so effectual as the old way of being turned off a ladder, and to increase the chances of his escape, prevailed upon him to insert a silver tube in his wind-pipe. On the appointed day, he came forth very gaily, with his tube, a well-dressed perucque, and a grand silk waistcoat; but, alas! Brodie's drop was too much for Brodie, and every effort to restore animation proved fruitless.

The gossips say that similar expedients have been resorted to in various cases, particularly in that of Dr. Dodd, and some do not scruple to add that in this instance the experiment was successful. Whether this is possible or probable we shall not stay to enquire, but it seems that if the idea is a delusion, its influence is not confined to our own country, for the following paragraph, which we met with in a New York Paper of last December, shews that similar attempts to baffle the hangman have been resorted to in America.

"Police.—A man of decent appearance called at the office yesterday afternoon, to lodge a complaint, and ascertain how he should proceed against a certain desperate offender, whose name, for prudential purposes, is not at this moment given, and for whom and his coadjutors the police have been some time seeking. He had

swindled the complainant and two of his friends out of a large sum. His plan was, in the first instance, to procure a respectable introduction to the complainant, and then, with a display of forged checks and drafts on Philadelphia, to obtain the advance desired.

"A singular circumstance disclosed by the villain to an intimate of his was, that he was one of the robbers of the southern mail two or three years since, and was tried, condemned, and apparently executed by hanging; but by a stratagem previously concerted with a surgeon, was restored to life and animation. The surgeon, he says, supplied him with a strong tube, which he forced down his throat, so that the neck bone could not be broken as he swung off; and that on the application of restoratives after he was cut down, he recovered! While his account seems improbable in itself, we may remember the case of Taylor many years since, restored to life, as is said, after being hanged; and the folly and gratuitous information of this fellow's acknowledgement if the fact were not so.

THEATRICAL FIRE.—The beautiful crimson fire, now commonly used to represent conflagrations and explosions in our Theatres, is produced from a composition made of the following ingredients:—Forty parts of dry nitrate of strontian, thirteen parts of finely-powdered sulphur, five parts of chlorate of pot ash, and four parts of sulphuret of antimony. The chlorate of pot ash and sulphuret of antimony should be powdered separately in a mortar, and then mixed together on paper; after which they may be added to the other ingredients, previously powdered and mixed.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—Hope, *, Clio, G. G., Jack Meggott, and George.—The plan suggested by Mentor shall be adopted as quickly as possible.

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 27.

SATURDAY, MAY 31, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it" — SHAKESPEARE.



CONJUGAL FELICITY IN HIGH LIFE.

THE story of which the above cut illustrates a STRIKING incident, forms one of those mixtures of history and romance, which, if not actually founded on fact, cannot be said to be absolutely false, though while the groundwork is real, the superstructure reared upon it is for the most part fanciful and fictitious. The outline of the circumstances, which is all we can spare room for, will shew our readers that whatever might originally be the state of the case, modern detailers of it have taken the liberty of fashioning it to suit their own purposes, and so contrived as to make the incidents correspond with others of a much more recent date.

About the year 1682, says our authority, the eldest son of the Elector of Hanover (afterwards George 1st of England) was married to his cousin Sophia, only child of the Duke of Zell. The match was entirely one of

state policy, and gave from the outset little promise of happiness, for the young Prince's thoughts were entirely engrossed by dissipation, while the affections of his bride had previously been bestowed upon Count Koning-smark, a Swedish nobleman, resident at her father's court. The seeds of mutual dislike and jealousy, thus implanted, soon sprung up and brought forth fruit; for the coldness of the Prince was converted into utter aversion by the levity and unguarded conduct of his wife, who in her own country had imbibed notions of propriety utterly foreign to those which regulated the behaviour of her new associates. Complaint from either party produced only recrimination and defiance, and at one of their angry interviews, forgetting both his sex and quality, the Prince thrust her from him so rudely that she fell senseless on the ground. To enter upon a description

of all the farther provocations on the one side, and severity on the other, which existed for a long period, and which the original history details with painful minuteness, would be worse than useless; suffice it to add that the Princess was eventually conveyed to the castle of Alten, a strong fortress in the Electorate of Hanover, where she was imprisoned during the remainder of her existence, a period of nearly forty years; dying in 1727, a few months before her husband, and leaving behind her one son, afterwards George the Second.

Which portion of this narrative is genuine, and which fictitious, we have no means of distinguishing, but the outline, we believe, is strictly true, and adds one more to the many instances we daily witness of the sorrow and deadly discord engendered by those ill-judged marriages, the parties to which are paired but not matched, and the worst consequences of which generally fall to the lot of the weaker sex.

"Alas, the love of women! it is known
To be a lovely and a fearful thing,
For all of theirs upon that die is thrown,
And if 'tis lost, life hath no more to
bring,—

To them but mockeries of the past alone,
And their revenge is as the tiger's
spring,—

Deadly, and quick, and crushing; yet as
real.

Torture is theirs:—what they inflict
they feel.

"They're right! for man, to man so oft
unjust,

Is always so to women. One sole bond
Awaits them; treachery's their only trust,
Taught to conceal, their bursting hearts
despond

Over their idol, till some weal their lusts
Buys them in marriage; and what
rests beyond?—

A thankless husband; next, a faithless
lover;

Then dressing, nursing, praying,—and
all's over!"

DON JUAN.

COLONEL BLOOD.

(Resumed from page 205.)

BEFORE Blood engaged in the affair of rescuing Captain Mason, he had lived at Rumford, under the name of

Ayliffe, and pretended to practise physic. After he was cured of his wounds, and heard that all that were concerned with him were safe, which was in about six weeks, he returned to Rumford, and lived there, under the same disguise, for a considerable time, without being suspected or molested, notwithstanding a proclamation was published, with an offer of five hundred pounds reward, for apprehending the persons concerned in the rescue. It was, however, impossible for one of his restless temper to continue long quiet; but his next enterprise was in every respect more singular and more hazardous than any he had hitherto attempted: this was seizing the person of his old antagonist, the Duke of Ormond, in the streets of London, with a view to murder him. He actually attempted to put his design into execution on the 6th of December, 1670, and was very near completing his purpose; however the duke was fortunately rescued out of his hands, but himself and his associates all escaped, though closely pursued. An account of this transaction was immediately published by authority, together with a royal proclamation, offering a reward of one thousand pounds for apprehending any of the persons concerned therein, but to no purpose, for Blood was not so much as thought of or suspected.—The clearest account that we have of this surprising transaction, is to this effect:—The Prince of Orange came that year into England, and, being invited on December the 6th to an entertainment in the City, his grace attended him thither. As he was returning home, in a dark night, and going up St. James's-street (at the end of which, facing the palace, stood Clarendon-house, where he then lived) he was attacked by Blood and five accomplices. The duke always used to go attended with six footmen; but, as they were too heavy a load upon a coach, he had iron spikes behind it, to keep them from getting up, and continued this practice to his dying day, even after this attempt of assassination. These six footmen used to walk on both sides of the street, over-against the coach; but, by some

contrivance or other, they were all stopped, and out of the way, when the duke was taken out of his coach by Blood and another, and mounted on horseback behind one of the horse-men in his company. The coachman drove on to Clarendon-house, and told the porter the duke had been seized by two men, who had carried him down Piccadilly. The porter immediately ran that way; and a Mr. James Clark, who chanced to be at that time in the house, followed with all possible haste, having first alarmed the family, and ordered the servants to come after him as fast as they could. Blood, it seems, to glut his revenge, by putting his grace to the same ignominious death which his accomplices in the treasonable design upon Dublin castle had suffered, had taken a strong fancy into his head to hang the duke at Tyburn. Nothing could have saved his grace's life, but this extravagant whim of the villain, who, leaving the duke mounted, and buckled to one of his comrades, rode on before, and (as is said) actually tied a rope to the gallows, and then rode back to see what was become of his accomplices, whom he met riding off in a great hurry. The horseman, to whom the duke was tied, was a person of great strength, but, being embarrassed by his grace's struggling, could not advance as fast as he desired. He had, however, got a good way beyond Berkley, (now Devonshire) house, towards Knightsbridge, when the duke, having got his foot under the man's, unhorsed him, and they both fell down together in the mud, where they were struggling when the porter and Mr. Clark came up. The villain then disengaged himself, and, seeing the neighbourhood alarmed, and numbers of people running towards the place, got on horseback, and having, with one of his comrades, fired their pistols at the duke (but missed him, from taking their aim in the dark, and in a hurry), rode off as fast as they could to save themselves. The duke (being sixty years of age) was quite spent with struggling; so that, when Mr. Clark and the porter came up, they knew him rather by his star,

than by any sound he could utter; and were forced to carry him home and lay him on a bed to recover his spirits. He received some wounds and bruises in the struggle, which confined him within doors for some days.—(Resumed at page 219.)

"TRUE NO-MEANING."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NIC-NAC.

SIR,—A friend of mine, a cheese-monger, who favours me with the privilege of inspecting his literary stores (which, unlike the generality of persons who purchase only the lighter and more flimsy productions, he values according to weight), and who, aware of my insatiable thirst for knowledge, punctually encloses my periodical supply of butter and cheese in a portion of the periodical publications (by the way, I never get so much as a leaf of the "Nic-Nac" in this manner). He sent me, a few days ago, among other interesting variegations, a part of the first (and LAST) No. of a small work, in which I met with the following blundering article, intended to give an exemplification of the difference of meaning between the words ENOUGH and SUFFICIENT.—The writer, whose intellect seems to have been "bemused in beer," has, in concert with his worthy helpmate, the printer, contrived to make the matter SUFFICIENTLY obscure, or, as the learned Dr. Dennis O'Reilly classically phrases it, "as clear as mud." Perhaps, Mr. Editor, you will think it worth while to use your "learned endeavours" in throwing a light on the business, or, to borrow a metaphor from my friend Mr. White, to pare off the rind and cut away the rotten part, so as to render it sound and wholesome for the mental nutriment of the babes and sucklings, who delight in and fatten on your weekly supply of good things, amongst whom I beg leave to subscribe myself,

Yours, JACK MEGGOTT.

*May 19, 1823.

"The following is an illustration of a precept of Dr. Blair, in his directions to obtain perspicuity and

precision in writing; where the words *Enough* and *Sufficient* are considered as synonyms in language. The communication is made, we understand in the character of Cœlebs:—

‘*ENOUGH, SUFFICIENT*.—*Enough* relates to quantity—*Sufficient* refers to the use that is to be made of it:’

“Give me your love, dear maid,

And I’ll desire no other,

I then should have *ENOUGH*,

But none to *SPARE* another.

“*TO AN ANTICIPATED
PERFECTION.*

W.

[After making sundry attempts to discover the meaning of this delectable piece of composition, and throwing in some cups of strong coffee to brighten our intellectual faculties without effect, we are compelled to relinquish the task in despair: but we hereby promise to present half-a-dozen sets of the *NIC-NAC* to any “learned Theban,” who will satisfactorily explain the matter.] ED.

THE GUILDHALL GIANTS.

GIGANTIC figures of wicker-work usually formed part of the pageants anciently displayed on festive occasions in various parts of the kingdom, and it is scarcely doubtful that the stupendous figures in Guildhall, London, commonly called *GOG* and *MAGOG*, were manufactured principally for the purpose of being carried in the Lord Mayor’s Show. The city archives, however, afford no trace of the period when they were originally formed. The little that is known respecting them has been carefully condensed by Mr. Hone, in his recently-published work on “*Ancient Mysteries*,” from which we transcribe the following particulars:—

The statues now existing are of comparatively recent construction, according to a rare work called “*The Gigantick History of the Two Famous Giants in Guildhall, London*,” 1741, which says:—“Before the present Giants inhabited Guildhall, there were two made only of wicker-work and pasteboard, put together with great art and ingenuity; and those two terrible original Giants had the honour yearly to grace my Lord Mayor’s

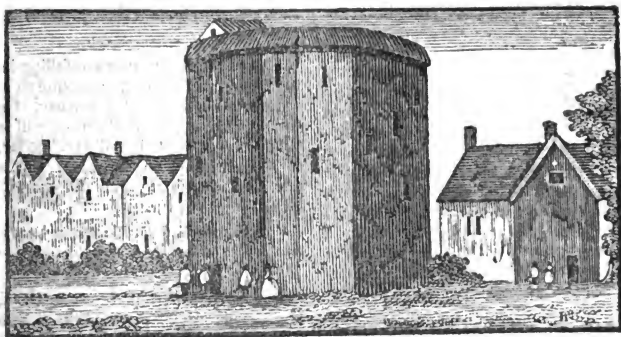
Show, being carried in great triumph in the time of the Pageants; and when that eminent annual service was over, remounted their stations in Guildhall; till, by reason of their very great age, old Time, with the help of a number of city rats and mice, had eaten up all their entrails. The dissolution of the two old, weak, and feeble Giants, gave birth to the two present substantial and majestic Giants, who, by order, and at the city charge, were formed and fashioned. Captain Richard Saunders,* an eminent carver in King Street, Cheapside, was their father, who, after he had completely finished, clothed, and armed these his two sons, they were immediately advanced to those lofty stations in Guildhall, which they have peaceably enjoyed ever since the year 1708.”

To prove the validity of this statement (says Mr. Hone), I examined the city accounts, at the Chamberlain’s Office, and under the head of “*Extraordinary Works*,” for 1707, I discovered among the sums “paid for repairing of the Guildhall and Chapel,” the following entry, which confirms the relation of the historian:—

“To Richard Saunders, Carver,
Seaventy pounds, by order of
the Co’mittée for Repairing
Guildhall, dated ye xth of April,
1707, for work by him done.” 70l

Until the last reparation of Guildhall, in 1815, the Giants, which are now placed at the western extremity, stood opposite the entrance (with the old clock and a balcony of iron work between them), over the stairs leading to the Courts of Law. When they were taken down in that year, proceeds Mr. Hone, and placed on the floor of the Hall, I thoroughly examined them. They are made of wood, and hollow within, and, from the method of joining and gluing the interior, are evidently of late construction, but they are too substantially built to have been intended to be either carried or drawn, or any way exhibited in a pageant. This perhaps occasioned the appearance of the Men in Armour, in the Annual Show, as substitutes.

* A Trainband Captain, probably.



THE SWAN THEATRE, ON BANKSIDE.

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE, SECTION 5.—This was the most westerly of the theatres on Bankside, standing close to the water's edge, nearly opposite what is now called Bridge-street, Blackfriars. The period of its erection is uncertain, and the performances were probably of a very inferior nature, but no particulars of them have reached the present time. In 1613 it was shut up, and we learn from an old pamphlet published in 1632, that it had then fallen into decay. It was totally demolished, with several others, by order of the Parliament at the commencement of the civil wars. The precise spot it occupied it is now difficult or impossible to determine, a complete revolution having taken place in the neighbourhood, during the lapse of two centuries; the buildings everywhere are modernized, and the ancient names of the streets, &c. entirely changed. Thus perish even the traces of the boasted works of man, whose most durable productions are scarcely less perishable and transitory than himself.

"We build with what we deem eternal rock;—

A distant age asks where the fabric stood,
And in the dust, sifted and searched in vain,

The undiscoverable secret sleeps."

The works of nature alone remain unchanged. The mighty river on the

banks of which stood these Theatres, the objects of so much curious research, still rolls with undiminished grandeur past the spot; but, of those resorts of the gay and dissipated, not a vestige remains. In meditating upon these things, it is impossible to repress a sigh at the instability of man's boasted importance and earthly grandeur. Pursuing the train of reflection awakened thus, may we not in fancy behold the time when the sites of our present magnificent theatres and palaces will be sought for as earnestly and as fruitlessly. This just now appears very improbable, but the lapse of a few centuries has produced vicissitudes still more strange and unlooked for.

The opening of Southwark Bridge, and the increased degree of traffic and speculation consequent thereupon, have mainly contributed to change the features of the neighbourhood of Bankside. In 1817, previous to the completion of the Bridge, the writer of this article, accompanied by a friend, paid a visit to the classic spot, and, by the aid of the old maps, had the satisfaction of ascertaining with precision the sites of the Globe, Rose, and Hope, theatres, which the delay of a few months would have rendered utterly impracticable, for the work of devastation has since been carried on with untiring activity; old buildings have been levelled, and ancient titles

altered, and Globe-alley and Rose-alley, will, doubtless ere long, be names unknown. We cannot conclude our notice of this neighbourhood without expressing a hope that, while places, rendered interesting by their connection with writers far less celebrated than Shakspeare, are distinguished by tablets and cenotaphs, the spot which witnessed alike the hopes and fears of our great bard's outset in life and the splendour of his meridian, will not always be suffered to remain undistinguished by some ornamental arch, or column, in commemoration of the circumstance.

(Resumed at page 217.)

Interesting Varieties.

WESTMINSTER HALL.

Had formerly shops on each side, along the whole length of the building. I have a print of its interior in that state, about 1720, with books, prints, gloves, and other articles, displayed for sale in cases against the walls, and on the counters, at which people are being served; lawyers and their clients walk and converse in the middle of the hall; the judges are sitting "in open court," the courts being merely partitioned off from the body of the hall, to the height of eight or nine feet. Exeter Change now, except as to width, is a pretty accurate resemblance of the Westminster Hall then.—("Hone's Mysteries," p. 266.)

TAIL-BEARERS.—The "Golden Legend" relates that the Apostle of England, St. Austin, came once to a certain town, inhabited by wicked people, who "refused his doctrine and preaching utterly, and drof hym out of the towne, casting on hym the tayles of thorn-back, or lyke fys-ses; wherefore he besought Almygh-ty God to shewe his jugement on them; and God sent to them a shameful token, for the chyldren that were born after in the place, had tayles, as it is sayd, tyll they had repented them. It is said comynly that this fell at Strode in Kente; but,

blyssyed be God, at thys daye is no such deformyte."—(Ibid, p. 280.)

CHRISTMAS CAROLS are falling into disuse, and begin to be spoken of as not belonging to this century. On the 3d Oct. 1822, at the dinner of a City Company, I heard Mr. Taylor, of Covent Garden Theatre, sing a new ballad of "good old times," when

—"Christmas had its Christmas Carol,
And ladies' sides were hoop'd like barrels."

Yet no one, that I am aware of, has hitherto attempted a collection of these fugitives, except Gilbert Davies, Esq. who has recently published "Eight Ancient Christmas Carols, with the Tunes to which they were formerly sung." The attachment of Carol buyers extends even to the wood-cuts by which they are surrounded. Some of these on a sheet of Carols in 1820, that I requested the publisher, Mr. T. Batchelor, of 115, Long Alley, Moorfields, to sell me the original blocks; I was a little surprised by his telling me that he was afraid it would be impossible to get any of the same kind cut again. When I proffered to get much better engraved, and give them to him in exchange for the old ones, he said, "Yes, but better are not so good; I could get better myself, but these are old favourites, and better cuts would not please my customers so well."—(Ibid.)

OPIMUM.—The work called "The Confessions of an English Opium Eater" appears to have had an effect which the writer doubtless little anticipated. Dr. Gordon, one of the witnesses on an inquest held May 21, on the body of an apprentice to Mr. Dunniford, druggist, of Cheapside, deposed thus, "he found the deceased's stomach so impregnated with opium, that he was convinced it was the occasion of his death. The practice of taking Opium, he added, had considerably increased of late, in consequence of a little book having been published, which writes many extra-

ordinary ~~oases~~. Indeed, no less than four instances had recently come within his own knowledge, of persons having been brought to the verge of death by it, and on his asking the reason, replied, I had read the book, and was induced to try the experiment. In fact, almost every young man of science has been induced to purchase the book, "which is of universal ill tendency."—(See "M. Herald," May 22.)

GINGER BEER.—This, when well made, is one of the most agreeable as well as one of the most wholesome beverages that can be imagined. The subjoined receipt for producing it in high perfection, may be found useful during the summer months:—"Take 1½ oz. of Ginger, well bruised, 1 oz. of Cream of Tartar, and 1 lb. of white sugar; put these ingredients into an earthen vessel; and pour upon them a gallon of boiling water, when cold, add a table-spoon full of yeast, and let the whole stand till the next morning. Then skim it, bottle it, and keep it three days in a cool place before you drink. Be sure to use good sound corks, and secure them with twine or wire."

STANZAS,

BY MRS. CORNWELL BARON WILSON.

If for awhile my heart is lighten'd
Of all its weary load of care;
If for awhile my cheek is brighten'd
By Pleasure's sun-beam straying there;
Oh, stranger! do not deem that sadness
Ne'er shaded o'er my heart or brow;
Nor think the faithless smile of gladness
Will always gild my cheek as now!

No! tho' awhile, this cheek may borrow
From Pleasure's dream a brighter
shade;

Too oft the bosom, wakes to sorrow
O'er Hope deceiv'd, o'er Love betray'd!
Too oft this heart, o'er prospects blighted,
The bitter tears of grief will shed;
Too oft it mourns affection slighted
And broken vows, and friendships fled!

Then, stranger! do not trust these smiling
Deceitful looks that now I wear;
The joy that seems the most beguiling,
Too oft conceals a breast of care.

Thou ne'er would'st guess the bitter sadness
That wrings this heart, and clouds this brain;
And that these seeming smiles of gladness
Are but to hide the bosom's pain!

TO

Oh! gone for ever are the hours
In joy and smiles that found us;
Now other ties, alas! are ours,
Now other spells have bound us.
No more the sparkling cup we drain,
Hush'd is the midnight measure:
Oh! gone, and ne'er to come again,
Are all those hours of pleasure.

All lonely now, the festive scene
No trace of joy discloses;
And sadness reigns, where mirth has
been,
As winter blights the roses.
So yonder sun's resplendent light,
O'er earth and ocean beaming,
Will vanish with returning night,
And leave as sad a seeming,

REGINALD.

SHAKSPEARE'S SONNETS.

In the "New Monthly Magazine" for May, there is an Essay on these beautiful poems, in which the writer argues that as they were not printed before 1609, and Shakspeare died in 1623, they must have been written towards the close of his life. This, however, is a non sequitur. Though they were not published till 1609, they must have been written much sooner, since they are mentioned by Meres, in his "Wit's Treasury," 1598—"As the soule of Euphorbus (says he) was thought to live in Pythagoras, so the sweete wittie soule of Ovid lives in mellifluous and hony-tongued Shakespeare; witnes his 'Venus and Adonis,' his 'Lucrece,' his sugred SONNETS among his private friends,' &c.

The Wit's Nunchion.

A POSER.—A pedantic country school-master asked a sailor what was the third and half-third of tenpence. The sailor, who was illiterate, but unwilling to confess his ignorance, evaded giving

an answer, by saying that he did not choose to give that knowledge for nothing, which had cost him much expense and trouble to acquire: adding that he could propose a much harder question. The pedagogue, piqued at this, exclaimed, "What is that?"—"Why," said the tar, "if a pound of cheese cost fourpence, what will a cart-load of turnips amount to?"

COLONEL COCKBURN rose from the rank of a private to that of Commander in Chief at St. Eustatia. One morning, at a review of the garrison, he saw one of the soldiers, whose dress was much soiled, and stepping up to him, demanded, in a haughty tone, "How dare you, you rascal, appear in so dirty a state?—your shirt is as black as ink,—did you ever see me in such a plight, when I was a private?"—"No, may it please your honour, I never did," replied the trembling culprit, "but, then, to be sure, your honour's mother was a washerwoman."

ARNOLD, the American traitor, during some military operations in Virginia, took prisoner one of his countrymen. After some general conversation with the captive, he asked him what he thought the Congress would do with him, if they caught him. The American at first declined giving him an answer; but, upon being repeatedly urged, he said, "Why, sir, if you insist upon my replying to your question, you must excuse my telling you the plain truth. I believe, if my countrymen were to catch you, they would first cut off that lame leg, which was wounded in the cause of freedom and virtue,* and bury it with the honours of war; and then hang the remainder of your body upon the nearest gibbet."

COBBETT AND BYRON.—The 'Southampton Luminary' prints the follow-

* Arnold was wounded in one of his legs during an attack upon Quebec.

ing Epigram as Lord Byron's, and vouches for its authenticity:—

In digging up thy bones, Tom Paine,
Old Cobbett hath done well:
You visit him on earth again,
He'll visit you in hell.

YANKEE WIT.—Shortly after the independence of the American Colonies was acknowledged, a native of the United States was present at a London theatre, when an interlude was performed, in ridicule of his countrymen. A number of American officers being introduced, in tattered uniforms and barefoot, the question was put to them severally, "What was your trade before you entered the army?" One answered, "a taylor," another, "a cobbler," &c. and the aim was to banter them for not keeping themselves clothed and shod; but, before this could be expressed, the American exclaimed from the gallery, "Great Britain beaten by taylors and cobblers! Huzza!" Even the prime minister, who was present, could not refrain from joining in the general peal of laughter which this sally called forth.

BEGINNING AT THE WRONG END.—A wag observing a wretched artist busily employed on a scaffold, inquired what he was doing. "Why," replied he, "I am whitewashing this ceiling, which I am afterwards going to paint."—"Let me recommend you," said the wag, "to reverse the process: paint it first, and whitewash it afterwards."

THE ABBE F—T, notorious for his simplicity and blunders, calling one day upon an acquaintance, whom he found indisposed, exclaimed, "How dreadfully you look to-day." But, instantly reflecting that what he had said might alarm the invalid, he added, "And yet you don't look at all worse than you always do."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—Curiosus, T.G., Memnon, and George. Semel shall hear from us.

ERRATA.—P. 207 col. 1, line 25, read "Peronne:" l. 43, read "beef-steaks."

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

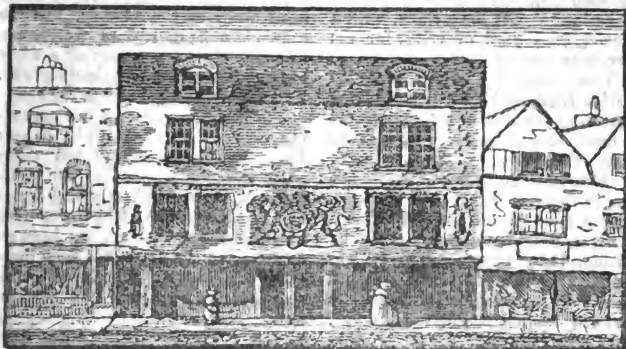
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 28.

SATURDAY, JUNE 7, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it"—SHAKESPEARE.



THE FORTUNE THEATRE, GOLDEN LANE.

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE, SECTION 6.—The site of the seventh house in our list, the WHITEFRIARS, lay between the eastern gate of the Temple and Water Lane, Fleet Street. It was a small building, and very ancient, being enumerated by a writer in 1628, as one of the playhouses pulled down by the "cautious citizens" in 1580 (vide page 154). So few and indistinct are the notices of it, that an utter blank occurs in its history, from this period till July 1613, when a license was granted by James 1st. for the erection of a new playhouse here, and we may therefore conclude with some appearance of probability that it remained in ruins during the interval. The license, however, was not acted upon till the year 1629, when a Theatre was erected under its authority in Salisbury Court, and not on the site of the old house, as has erroneously been asserted by some writers. A company called the Prince's Servants performed there, until the Revolution put a general stop to dramatic exhibitions, when the house remained closed till the Restoration.

THE BLACKPRIARS.—This house,

the Whitefriars, and the Cockpit, in Drury Lane, were called Private Theatres. The distinguishing marks of a private from a public theatre in those days, it is not now very easy to ascertain; we know only that they were smaller than the public ones, and, unlike them, presented their performances by candle-light, being roofed over, while the others were partly open to the weather. The Pits also were furnished with benches, which was not the case at the public theatres. The Blackfriars was built between the years 1570 and 1580, and its site was on or near to the spot where now stands Apothecaries' Hall, at the southern side of which there is yet a place called Playhouse Yard.

This Theatre and the Globe belonged to the same set of actors, who played at the two houses alternately, and were called the King's Servants, having been granted a license to perform by James 1st, in 1603. This company, of which Shakspeare was a member, continued for a long series of years to enjoy a very flourishing state of affairs, for their entertainments being more rational, and the acting

better, than at any other theatre, the audiences were naturally more refined, and the establishment altogether was looked upon as the most reputable in the metropolis. The performers, like the other members of the Royal Household, were sworn into office, and each man was allowed four yards of bastard scarlet for a cloak, with a quarter of a yard of velvet for the cape, every second year.

THE FORTUNE, which stood in Golden Lane, and took its name from a painting or statue of Fortune placed in front of it, was built by Edward Alleyn the player, in the year 1600, at an expense of 520*l.* a considerable sum in those days. On the 29th December, 1621, it took fire at 12 o'clock at night, and the interior was totally consumed in two hours. It was shortly after rebuilt upon an enlarged scale, and the company continued to perform there till February, 1648, when a peremptory order for suppressing all theatres was issued by the Parliament. The premises were then taken possession of by the trustees of Dulwich College, to which charity they had been bequeathed by Alleyn, and in the "*Mercurius Politicus*" of Tuesday, February 14, to Tuesday, February 21, 1661, the site was advertised to be let for building upon; an offer which does not appear to have been accepted by any one, since it was represented to the Archbishop, upon his visitation in 1687, that the College had been brought considerably into debt, by the defalcation of its revenues, "caused by the falling in of the Fortune Playhouse."

The ground on which the Fortune stood was previously occupied by a building used as a nursery for the children of Henry the 8th. Golden Lane being in the sixteenth century an airy situation, in the outskirts of the town. It seems to be probable that when Alleyn converted the premises into a theatre, he spared the old front, which is still in existence, and forms the subject of the cut prefixed to this article. This, at least, is the general opinion, for the Arms of England, and Emblems of Charity, with which it is embellished, appear

more likely to have decorated a royal nursery, than such a building as we may presume a theatre in those days to have been. "To what base uses may we not return!" This once-royal fabric is now divided into two miserable tenements, forming Nos. 61 and 62, in Golden Lane, the first of which is occupied as a seed-shop, and the other as a Staffordshire warehouse. They stand at the corner of a filthy passage called Rose Alley, leading to St. Thomas's burial-ground in the rear.

The sketch from which our engraving was executed, was made in the year 1818, and little change has taken place in the appearance of the building since that period, save and except that the lower part, which was then untenanted and shut up, has been reopened, and the front has been decorated with two or three boards, proclaiming the occupations of the tenants. A view of this building is given in the "*Londina Illustrata*;" but, though a very spirited engraving, it conveys the idea of a substantial tenement, rather than of the miserable tottering ruin which the house really is. The whole appearance of the place is highly curious, and well deserves a visit from the antiquary.

The interior of the premises was carefully surveyed by the editor of the "*Londina Illustrata*," a few years since, but we suspect he was a good deal indebted to his imagination when he discovered the traces of the old theatre, which he describes in the subjoined passage:—"It is a curious circumstance, that, in the upper story, the floor of the Gallery yet remains; nay, the marks where the seats were fixed are to be discovered. This floor, consequently descends in the same manner, though perhaps not in so regular a declination, as that of the Gallery of a modern Playhouse; and one would be rather puzzled to conjecture how it was possible to place any furniture upon this inclined plane, did not necessity solve the difficulty of the case. The poor inhabitants of this Theatre, once the mansion of mirth, and (we hope) of morality, under the impulse of dire necessity, do, by some means or other, contrive

to accommodate their wretched beds, &c. to their situation, though it is certainly like living on a flight of stairs."—(Resumed at page 233.)

COLONEL BLOOD.

(Resumed from page 211.)

THE miscarriage of Blood's last daring design, instead of daunting him, put him on another still more strange and hazardous plan, to repair his broken fortunes:—He proposed to the desperate persons, who had assisted him in his former attempt, to seize and divide amongst them the royal jewels kept in the Tower of London; and, as they readily acceded to the proposal, he devised a scheme for the purpose, which was so cunningly laid, and executed with such an audacious spirit, May 9, 1671, that he got the regalia into his possession, and was near carrying off his booty, when he was pursued and taken. The best account of the affair is to this effect:—About three weeks before Blood made his attempt, he went to the Tower, in the habit of a clergyman, and brought a woman with him, whom he called his wife. This pretended wife desired to see the Crown, and, having seen it, affected to have a qualm come upon her, and begged the keeper, Mr. Edwards, to send for some spirits, who immediately caused his wife to fetch some. At their departure, they declared themselves very thankful for this attention. About three days after, Blood came again to Mr. Edwards, with a present of four pair of new gloves from his wife; and, having thus begun the acquaintance, made frequent visits to improve it, professing that he could never sufficiently acknowledge their kindness. At length he told Mrs. Edwards, that his wife could discourse of nothing but the kindness of the good people in the Tower; that she had long studied, and at length had bethought herself of a handsome way of requital. "You have," said he, "a pretty gentlewoman to your daughter, and I have a young nephew, who has two or three hundred pounds a year in land, and is at my disposal; if your daughter is

free, and you approve of it, I will bring him hither to see her, and we will endeavour to make it a match." This was easily assented to by Mr. Edwards, who invited the pretended parson to dine with him that day, and he as readily accepted the invitation. At his departure, he appointed a day and hour to bring his nephew, which was the very day that he made his attempt, the ninth of May, about seven in the morning.

At that time the old man was up, ready to meet his guests; and the daughter had put herself into her best dress to receive her gallant; when Blood, with three more, came to the jewel house, all armed with rapier-blades in their canes, and every one a dagger, and a pair of pocket-pistols; two of his companions entered with him, and the third staid at the door to keep watch. The daughter thought it not modest for her to come down till she was called, but sent her maid to take a view of the company, and to bring her a description of the person of her gallant. In the interim, Blood told Mr. Edwards that they would not go up stairs till his wife came, and desired him to show his friends the Crown, to pass away the time. As soon as they had entered the room where the Crown was kept, and the door as usual was shut behind them, they threw a cloak over the old man's head, and clapped a gag into his mouth, which was a great plug of wood, with a small hole to take breath at. Having thus secured him from crying out, they plainly told him, "That they were resolved to have the Crown, Globe, and Sceptre, and, if he would quietly submit to it, they would spare his life, otherwise he was to expect no mercy." He, however, made all the noise he possibly could, upon which they knocked him down with a wooden mallet, and told him that, upon the next attempt to discover them, they would kill him, and pointed three daggers at his breast; but still he exerted himself to make the greater noise, at which they gave him nine or ten strokes more upon the head with the mallet, and stabbed him in the belly. The poor man, almost

fourscore years old, fell, and lay some time senseless, when one of them kneeling on the ground to try if he breathed, and not perceiving any breath from him; said, "He is dead, I warrant him." Mr. Edwards, recovering a little, heard his words, and, conceiving it best to be so thought, lay very quietly. Concluding him dead, they omitted to tie his hands behind him; and Parret, one of the party, put the Globe into his breeches pocket; Blood kept the Crown under his cloak; and the third was desired to file the Sceptre in two, because too long to carry conveniently, and then to put it into a bag, brought for that purpose. But before this could be done, young Mr. Edwards, son of the old gentleman, just come from Flanders, chanced to arrive, and, coming to the door, the person who stood sentinel, asked him with whom would he speak; he answered he belonged to the house, and went up stairs, where he was welcomed by his mother, wife, and sister. In the mean time, the sentinel gave notice of the son's arrival, and they immediately hastened away with the Crown and the Globe, but left the Sceptre, not having time to file it. The old man returning to himself, got suddenly up, pulled out the gag, and cried out, "Treason! Murder!" The daughter hearing him, ran down, and seeing her father thus wounded, rushed upon the Tower-hill, and cried, "Treason! the Crown is stolen!" This gave the first alarm; and Blood and Parret making great haste, were suspected and pursued. By this time young Edwards, and one Captain Beckman, upon the cry of the sister, were come down to run after the villains, and the alarm being given to the Warder at the draw-bridge, he put himself in a posture to stop them. Blood came up first, and discharged a pistol at him, which missed him, but fear made him fall to the ground, and they got safe to the Little-Ward-house gate, where one Sill, one of Cromwell's soldiers, stood sentinel, who, though he saw the other Warder shot at, made no resistance, by which means they got over that draw-bridge,

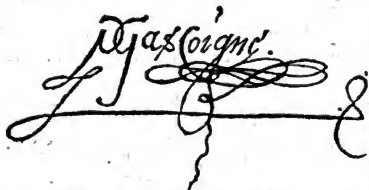
and through the outward gate upon the wharf, and made all possible haste towards their horses, which attended at St. Catherine's-gate, called the Iron-gate, crying, as they ran, "Stop the rogues!" Presently, however, Captain Beckman got up to them, when Blood discharged his second pistol at his head, but he, stooping down, avoided the shot, and seized upon him with the Crown under his cloak; yet Blood had the impudence, though he saw himself a prisoner, to struggle a long while for the Crown; and, when it was wrested from him, he said, "It was a gallant attempt, though unsuccessful, for it was for a Crown." A servant belonging to a Captain Sherborne, seized upon Parret, before Blood was taken. Hunt, another of them, son-in-law to Blood, leaped to horse, with two more of the conspirators, and rode far away; but a cart in the street chancing to turn short, Hunt ran his head against a pole that stuck out, which made him fall from his horse, but recovering his legs, and putting his foot into the stirrup, a cobbler standing by, cried, "This is Tom Hunt, who was in the bloody business against the Duke of Ormond; let us secure him!" Upon this a constable, being accidentally there, seized him; and he was, with Blood and Parret, committed to safe custody in the Tower. In the struggle for the Crown, the great pearl and diamond fell off, and were lost for a while, with some smaller stones; but the pearl was brought by a poor woman to one of the Warders, and the diamond by a barber's apprentice. Other small stones were picked up by several persons, and faithfully restored. The ruby, belonging to the sceptre, was found in Parret's pocket, so that nothing considerable was lost; the Crown only was bruised, and sent to be repaired.—(Concluded at p. 226.)

AUTOGRAPHS.

MANY fanciful people imagine that they can accurately divine any person's disposition by merely inspecting his hand writing; and Mr. Collett, in his recently published "Relics of Literature," has given fac-similes of

the signatures of various distinguished personages, accompanied by an Essay, in which he shews—to his own satisfaction, at least—that each signature displays the peculiar bent of the writer's mind. To us, we confess, this appears to be mere foolery; yet we have heard the believers in the system venture to ridicule the disciples of Lavater for pretending to read a man's character in his countenance, and those of Gall and Spurtzheim, for drawing similar conclusions from the number and size of the bumps on people's skulls.

Partly, however, from attaching credit to the above doctrine, but principally from the curiosity felt by every one respecting celebrated characters, it has latterly become the rage to collect specimens of the hand-writing of great authors, statesmen, warriors, &c.; while, for the gratification of those who are unable to procure the originals, fac-similes have been rapidly multiplied. The practice has, in some instances, been carried to a ridiculous excess, and collectors, in their eagerness to swell their stores, have preserved the signatures of people utterly obscure and contemptible, an absurdity which was happily ridiculed by Mathews, in his "At Home," a season or two ago. We here, however, present our readers with an autograph which lays claim to their attention, alike from the singularity of its formation, and the celebrity of the writer—George Gascoigne, one of the earliest English Dramatists, and a satirist of no mean powers, who died in 1578. It is accurately copied from one of his MS. pieces, called "Hemetes the Hermyte," preserved in the British Museum.



We suspect many of our professors of the noble art of penmanship would

find it difficult to execute a flourish surpassing in intricate ingenuity that of honest old George.

As an appropriate wind-up to this article, we give Mr. D'Israeli's description of the hand-writing of some of our living poets, viz.—Scott, Byron, Rogers, Moore, and Campbell:—"I am intimately acquainted," says he, "with the writing of five of our greatest poets. The first, in early life, acquired one which cannot be distinguished from that of his ordinary brethren. The second, educated in a public school, where writing is shamefully neglected, composes his sublime or sportive verses in a school-boy's ragged scrawl, as if he had never finished his tasks with the writing-master. The third writes his highly-wrought poetry in the common hand of a merchant's clerk, from early commercial avocations. The fourth has all that finished neatness which polishes his verses; while the fifth is a specimen of a full mind, not in the habit of correction or alteration, so that he appears to be printing down his thoughts, without a solitary erasure. The writing of the first and third is not indicative of their character; of the others, the autographs are admirably characteristic."

MAGAZINE GLEANINGS.

SIR CLOUDESLEY SHOVEL, the day before his shipwreck, was warned by one of the seamen of the Association, well acquainted with the navigation of the Channel, that by persevering in the course he was steering, he would inevitably run on Scilly Rocks. The Admiral, incensed at this interference, charged him with insubordination, and endeavouring to excite a mutiny in the ship, and, in a very summary way, condemned him to be hanged. The poor fellow begged, as a last favour, that a psalm might be read before his execution, which being granted, he made choice of the 109th, so distinguished for expressions either imprecatory, or declaratory of evil. He was hanged, however, according to his sentence,

yet the same Sir Cloudelet Shovel, who murdered this poor fellow, and lost his own life through neglect of the salutary warning, has a monument in Westminster Abbey. No fewer than 2000 men perished, because he disdained to enquire whether there was any foundation for the poor seaman's opinion, which, if incorrect, only deserved a reprimand.

(“Gentleman's.”)

PARIS. By the official returns for 1822 it appears that the births in Paris were 26,880, and the deaths only 23,269. Increase of population 3,611.

(“N. Monthly.”)

THE GREAT UNKNOWN.—A meeting of the Roxburgh Club was held on the 19th April, to elect a member for the vacancy occasioned by the death of Sir M. Sykes. The author of *Waverley* was nominated and chosen; and it was agreed that, if at any time his seat should be vacant, it should be taken by perhaps something more than his wrath, Sir Walter Scott.

(Ibid.)

EPIGRAM

ON A PICTURE IN THE EXHIBITION,
CALLED ‘THE DOUBTFUL SNEEZE.’

The doubtful sneeze! a failure quite—

A winker half, and half a gaper.

Alas! to paint on canvass here

What should have been on TISSUE-
paper.—(“London.”)

EELS.—Of the longevity of this fish, the following instance is recorded. John Meredith, an officer of excise, who resided in a cottage at Llanvas, Brecon, having, in the year 1781, caught a small eel, put it into a well in his garden, which is about nine feet deep, and three in diameter, but seldom contains more than two feet of water, except the neighbouring river, Usk, is swelled by floods, when it completely fills. Upon one inundation, in 1812, the eel above-mentioned appeared on the surface, and was caught in a pail, when, to use the language of Margaret Price (carrier from Brecon to Swansea), who tenanted the cottage at the time, it was “as thick as her arm, and coiled round the pail from bottom to top.” Thirty-one years it had existed in

its narrow abode, to which it was again consigned, and where it may probably still continue.

(“Annals of Sporting.”)

SHAKSPEARE'S PLAY HOUSE.

SIR,—You are correct in stating that the site of Shakspeare's Theatre, the *GLOBE*, is now partly occupied by the Brewhouse of Barclay and Perkins. Perhaps the following account of a building which formerly occupied the remaining part, may not be unacceptable to your readers.

Some years after the destruction of the theatre, a meeting-house for Protestant Dissenters, occupying a space of 2000 square feet, was erected on a portion of the site. It was opened in 1672 by the Rev. T. Wadsworth, who had been ejected from the living of St. Thomas Poultney, by the Bartholomew Act. After him it had numerous ministers, of the Presbyterian persuasion, till, during the time of a Mr. John Ward, (who first embraced the opinions of Arius, and afterwards of Socinus) the congregation gradually deserted the chapel, and it was closed in 1752. It was afterwards opened by a sect of Dissenters called Independents, whose first minister was a Mr. M'Kenzie. He was succeeded by Mr. Charles Skelton, who preached here for several years; but the society declining, he resigned his charge in 1776, and the house was again closed. It appears, however, to have been still used as a chapel occasionally, for the Rev. Sir H. Trelawney preached a charity-sermon here in the year 1789. It was shortly after converted into a warehouse; and subsequently into a mill to grind bones, which, for some time, formed a conspicuous object in this neighbourhood, but was pulled down in the month of February, 1820.

TRUTH.

TRANS-ATLANTIC VARIETIES, OR, SELECTIONS FROM AMERICAN JOURNALS.

(Resumed from page 196.)

REFINED LANGUAGE.—We transcribe the annexed elegant specimen of

dramatic criticism from the "New York Gazette" of the 7th September last:—

* "Theatrical.—A part of the company attached to the Baltimore Theatre, are playing at Washington. A critic in the Georgetown Metropolitan, is unmercifully severe on Mr. Wheatley, who, it seems, undertook to play an Iago-like trick on the Bard of Avon, by playing Iago. He says, 'could the bard have heard him, although he has slept three hundred years, his canonized and hearsed bones, would have burst their earments.'—He avers, 'his whole recitation was a dull monotonous bellowing, and when he attempted to contract or purse his brows, they seemed to be worked by a windlass, while his abdomen contained steam machinery, which gave a ten horse power to his tongue.'

MUSIC.—In the "New-York Daily Advertiser," of September 12, 1822, a music-dealer offered the following novel preventative against the pestilential fever then raging in that city:

"Music can soften pain to ease, And make despair and madness please."

At a time when so much alarm is excited by the prevailing epidemic, it is the duty of the Philanthropist to suggest every plausible method of preventing its approach, or ameliorating its effects. It is an axiom of the Medical Faculty, that cheerfulness and serenity of mind is a potent preventive of contagion; while fear, gloom, and despondency, render the nervous system susceptible of evils to which a different state of mind would afford an impenetrable barrier. And now, when

"Midst filth, by heat and moisture bred,
Fell fever rears his ghastly head;
Rising from noxious—steaming ground,
Spreads death and desolation round,"

What can so effectually prepare the mind to protect the body as Music? The almost miraculous power of "Sweet sounds" has been felt and acknowledged in every age of the world. The harp of the shepherd David charmed away the moody fiend that possessed the bosom of his Royal master. The lyre of Orpheus is said

to have performed a still greater wonder in the regions of darkness: and history furnishes innumerable instances of disease, bodily as well as mental, readily yielding to the fascinations of Music. The bite of the Tarantula produces a madness which always terminates in death, unless counteracted by the magic influence of the delectable art.

Under these considerations, the Subscriber feels it a duty to invite all, who wish to guard themselves against contagion, during the present alarming crisis, to visit his Music Store, 29, Chatham-street, which is one of the most healthful and salubrious situations in the city. Here they may examine antidotes and remedies, of which the disciples of Hippocrates can never boast.—(Resumed at page 262).

Interesting Varieties.

LONGEVITY.—Certain animals, birds, and reptiles are very long-lived, though nothing can be discovered in their formation to account for the circumstance. The stag, the elephant, the eagle, the crow, the parrot, and the viper, are notorious for longevity; and in 1497, a carp of prodigious size was caught in a fish-pond in Suabia, with a ring of copper affixed to it, on which were engraved the words in Latin:—"I am the first fish that was put into this pond, by the hands of Frederick 2nd, Governor of the World, 5th October, 1230;" so that it must have lived 267 years.

POT-LUCK.—A German was invited by an English family to take pot-luck with them. At dinner he would eat no soup, no roast-beef, no turkey. "I do wait," said he, "for dat excellent POT-LOUCK." A person is in great danger of meeting with POT-luck, who walks in Edinburgh by night.

CIRCULATING LIBRARIES. The first of these establishments in London was opened in the year 1740, by one Batho, at the house now No. 132 in the Strand.

SCRIPTURAL MEMORANDUMS.—

Verse 18, Chapter 12, of the First Book of Maccabees, will serve admirably as a motto for a seal. The 21st Verse of the 7th Chapter of Ezra, contains every letter of the alphabet. The 19th Chapter of the 2d Kings and the 37th of Isaiah, are alike; also the last Chapter of 1st Samuel, and 10th Chapter 1st Chronicles.

BILE.

THE sallow cheek, the sunken eye,
The yellow round the pupil,
Proclaim (the doctor says) that I
Must take a draught and blue pill.

Of health (he gravely adds), you know,
The wise are ever cautious;
Then never mind a pill or so,
Or draught, however nauseous.

I sigh compliance, with an air
Of desp'rate resignation;
And strive to quell, with anxious care,
Each rising queer sensation.

The morning come, I fix my eyes
Upon the labell'd phial,
And straight my gorge begins to rise—
It is no common trial.

In vain the crimson-paper'd cork
Would fascinate the view;
Fancy on the contents will work,
And shudders at their hue.

Then to the compound tastes I pass,
The bitter, salt, and sour;
And, pouring all into a glass,
I—think for half an hour.

Oh! how unlike the rich black draught
Of port, from crusted bottle,
Whose merits, when they once have
quaff'd,
The very gods cannot tell!

Still, to the dose I owe her due,
This character I'll give her,—
She clears the skin, and stomach too,
And renovates the liver.

Good Livers all, then take this dose,
And pill, with stoic freedom;
But, happiest those good Livers, whose
Good livers never need 'em. +

THE HAPPY PAIR.

WHEN married, they say that all love's
at an end,
In a wife we can find neither mistress,
nor friend;
But I, who have tried it, with reason can
say,
I never was happy till that happy day.

Since the night on which Hymen con-
sign'd to my arms
My Susan, possess'd of a thousand dear
charms,
So smooth and so pleasant the minutes
have run,
Six years have elaps'd, yet they seem
but as one.

Our cares and our pleasures have still
been the same,
And of sorrow, 'tis certain, we've known
but the name,
We're mutually pleas'd in endeavouring
to please,
And tho' not very rich, still our hearts
are at ease.

If crosses occur (and who have not their
crosses?
Misfortunes at time will expose us to
losses),
Yet while they are trifling, in each
other's arms,
We sleep without care, and are free
from alarms.

The cynics must err, when they say in
this life
There's nothing but sorrow, and mad-
ness and strife;
I heed not their prating, their text I deny;
Take wives like my Susan, and prove
that they lie. T—g—

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—J. C., A. B., Lex, Tippo,
and G. Reprints of Nos. 7, 8, and 9,
are in progress. "The Stranger's
Grave" in a week or two.

ERRATA.—P. 209, col. 1, line 3, read
"of history." P. 210, col. 1, l. 45, read
"wealthier lust." P. 211, col. 2, l. 23,
dele "He;" l. 42, read "Mr. Mite."
P. 214, col. 2, l. 24, after "1820," in-
sert "were so rudely executed." P. 215,
col. 2, l. 32, read "1616."

THE NIC-NAG;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 29.

SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Mericrown it."—SHAKSPEARE.



THE CRUEL FRENCH MIDWIFE.

ABOUT the year 1673, a midwife at Paris had, by her great skill in her profession, acquired the support of a great number of the inhabitants, the most wealthy of whom she attended at their residences; but for those who from inclination, or a fear of exposure, wished to be privately delivered, she had accommodations in her own house, to which many females resorted.

By chance, however, a gentleman who lived next door to this midwife observed, that although many pregnant women went to lie in at her house, yet comparatively very few children were brought out; and his suspicions of foul practices towards the infants acquiring fresh strength daily, he at length consulted with several of his neighbours upon the matter, who

joined with him in soliciting from a magistrate a warrant to search for some plate they pretended to have lost; but, in order not to alarm the midwife, and put her on her guard, they began their sham search at the distance of nine or ten houses from hers.

When, however, they came to her residence, she affected the utmost unconcern, desiring them not to hurry themselves, but to proceed in their task with all possible circumspection. They did so, and on coming to the privy, they put down a hook which they had brought with them on purpose, and drew up the body of a child newly destroyed. They continued the search, till they had found the remains of no less than sixty-two children. The midwife was immediately apprehended and brought to trial, and being found guilty upon the fullest evidence, besides her own confession, she was condemned to die, which sentence was executed in the following horrible manner on the 28th May, 1673.

A strong kind of gibbet was erected, under which a fierce fire was kindled; and the prisoner, being brought to the place, was suspended from the gibbet in a large iron cage, in which were also placed sixteen wild cats, which had been caught for the purpose. When the torment of the flames began to be unbearable, the furious animals attacked the woman, as the cause of the agony they endured. In about fifteen minutes they tore out her eyes and entrails, yet still she continued alive and sensible, imploring some charitable spectator to put her quickly to death, but no one daring to comply with her entreaties, she remained in this frightful situation for the space of thirty-five minutes, and then died in unspeakable misery. At the time of her death, twelve of the cats had expired, and the other four survived but a minute or two longer.

Detestable as were the crimes of this she-monster, and justly as they merited the punishment of death, the unnecessary and lingering torments she was made to undergo, reflect disgrace upon the age and country in

which they were inflicted; nor does that infernal refinement of cruelty less deserve to be execrated, which thus condemned sixteen unoffending animals to the most agonizing sufferings, without the shadow of necessity or excuse.

COLONEL BLOOD.

(Concluded from page 220.)

UPON the total overthrow of Blood's daring scheme, his spirits failed him; and, while he remained prisoner in the Tower, he appeared not only silent and reserved, but dogged and sullen. He soon changed his temper however, when, contrary to all probability, and his own expectation, he was informed the king intended to examine him himself; this was brought about by the Duke of Buckingham, then the great favourite and first minister, who infused into his majesty, over whom he had for some time a great ascendancy, a curiosity to see so extraordinary a person, whose crime, daring as it was, argued a prodigious force of mind, and made it probable, that he might be capable of making important discoveries. These insinuations had such an effect upon the king that he consented to what the duke desired, which in the end proved disadvantageous to them all; for it brought discredit upon the royal character, an indelible load of infamy upon the duke, and ultimately produced Blood's ruin.—Blood was no sooner acquainted that he was to be introduced to the royal presence, than he conceived immediately he stood indebted for this honour to the notion the king, or some about him, had of his intrepidity, and therefore was not at all at a loss about the part he was to act, and on the acting of which well his life depended. He is allowed on all hands to have performed admirably upon this occasion; he answered whatever his majesty demanded of him clearly, and without reserve; he did not pretend to capitulate or make terms, but seemed rather pleased to throw his life into the king's hands by an open and boundless confession. He took care, however, to prepossess his majesty in his favour, by various

and those very artful methods. At the same time that he laid himself open to the law, he absolutely refused to impeach others; while he magnified the spirit and resolution with which his party had always acted against monarchy, he insinuated his own and their veneration for the person of the king; and, though he omitted nothing that might create a belief of his contemning death, yet he expressed infinite awe and respect for a monarch, who had condescended to treat him with such unusual indulgence. In short, the particulars of this examination were very curious.

It was foreseen by the Duke of Ormond, as soon as he knew the king designed to examine him, that Blood had no cause to fear; and indeed such an impression did his story and behaviour make on the mind of his sovereign, that he was not only pardoned, but set at liberty, and had a pension given him to subsist on. This conduct of his majesty, towards so high and notorious an offender, occasioned much speculation and many conjectures; of these some are still preserved, amongst which the sentiments of Sir Gilbert Talbot are very sensible, who seems to think the king's apprehensions determined him.* Blood's interest was, for some time, very great at court, where he solicited the suits of many of the unfortunate people of his party with success; but, as this gave great offence to some worthy persons while it lasted, so, after the disgrace and falling to pieces of the ministry called the Cabal, it began quickly to decline; and perhaps his pension also was ill paid, for we find him again amongst the malecontents, and acting in favour of popular measures, that were displeasing to the court. In this manner he spun out between nine and ten years, sometimes about the court, sometimes excluded from it, always uneasy, and in some scheme or other of an untoward kind, till at last he was treated in his own way, and

either circumvented by his own instruments, or drawn within the vortex of a sham plot, by some who were too cunning even for this master in his profession. It seems there were certain people who had formed a design of fixing an imputation of a scandalous nature upon the Duke of Buckingham, who was then at the head of a vigorous opposition against the court, and who, notwithstanding he had always courted and protected the Fanatics, had not, in respect to his moral character, so fair a reputation as to render any charge of that kind incredible. But whether this was conducted by Colonel Blood, whether a counter-plot was set on foot to defeat it and intrap Blood, or whether some whisper thrown out to alarm the duke, led him to secure himself by a contrivance of the same stamp, better concerted and more effectually executed; so, however, it was, that his grace, who was formerly so much a patron of the colonel, thought it requisite, for his own safety, to contribute to his ruin. The court of king's bench convicted him upon a criminal information for the conspiracy, and committed him to prison; and, while in custody there, he was charged with an action of scandalum magnatum, at the suit of the Duke of Buckingham, in which the damages were laid so high as 10,000*l.* but, notwithstanding this, Blood found bail, and was discharged from his imprisonment. He then retired to his house in Bowling Alley, Westminster, in order to take measures to deliver himself out of these difficulties; but, finding fewer friends than he expected, and meeting with other and more grievous disappointments, he was so much affected, as to fall into a distemper that speedily threatened his life. He was attended in his sickness by a clergyman, who found him sensible but reserved, declaring he was not at all afraid of death. In a few days he fell into a lethargy, and Wednesday, August 24, 1680, he departed this life. On the Friday following he was privately but decently interred in the new chapel in Tothill Fields. Yet such was the notion entertained by the generality of the

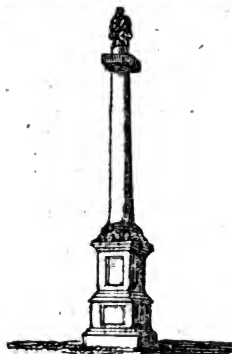
* Blood, it is said, declared that his fraternity had sworn to avenge the death of each other, even by taking the life of His Majesty himself.

world, of this man's subtlety and restless spirit, that they could neither be persuaded he would be quiet in the grave, nor would they permit him to remain so; for, a story being spread that this dying, and being buried, was only a new trick of Blood's, preparatory to some exploit more extraordinary than any he had been concerned in, it became, in a few days, so current, and so many circumstances were added to render it credible, that the coroner thought fit to order the body to be taken up again on Thursday following, and appointed a jury to sit upon it. But so strongly were they prepossessed with the idle fancy of its being all a contrivance, that, though they were his neighbours, knew him personally, and he had been so few days dead, they could not for a long time agree whether it was or was not his body. An intimate acquaintance of his, at last, suggested to them to view the thumb of his left hand, which, by an accident that happened to it, grew to twice its natural size, as was commonly known to such as had conversed with him. By this, and the various depositions of persons attending him in his last illness, they were at length convinced, and the coroner caused him to be once more interred, and left in his vault in quiet. Such were the transactions of this man's life, whose real adventures exceeding in strangeness what would appear fictitious even in romance, astonished his contemporaries, but were never before reduced into regular order for the information of posterity.

SHAKSPEARIAN OBELISK.

SIR,—I have read with great pleasure your interesting account of the various Ancient Theatres, and more particularly of those in any way connected with our idolized Shakspeare. Although the alterations which have taken place on Bankside since the completion of Southwark Bridge conduce to the accommodation of the inhabitants, and have doubtless greatly improved the appearance of that quarter of the metropolis, I cannot help regretting, in common I imagine

with every other admirer of our author, that all vestige of the spot upon which he formerly contributed to the delight and instruction of mankind, have thereby been completely effaced. As the road which leads southward from the bridge is crossed at a short distance from the site of the GLOBE Theatre, by Union-street, leading from the Borough to Blackfriars, it would at once do honour to the memory of Shakspeare, and be a work of public utility, if the Bridge Company, or a few devoted admirers of Shakspeare, erected at the intersection of the roads a handsome obelisk to his honour, in lieu of the paltry wooden lamp-post, surrounded by stunted shrubs, which at present disgraces the spot. It might be lighted with gas, in a manner similar to those in Fleet-street and St. George's Fields, be surmounted by a statue of the bard, and display on the four sides appropriate emblems and inscriptions. To afford a more clear idea of what I propose, I send you a slight sketch, which I shall be happy to see in the NIG-NAC.



I do not pretend to offer this as a faultless design, but merely as a hint, which others may perhaps take the trouble to improve upon. Should the plan I suggest be adopted, it will serve at a trifling expence to express in a high degree our veneration for the memory of Shakspeare, and will afford peculiar satisfaction to

Your humble Servant,
J. B.

POETRY AND POETS.—No. II.

LORD BYRON was born, I have been told, in the New Inn, at Aberdeen: if so, his virulent attacks upon Scotchmen are rather strange.

To those who are fond of gleaning every scrap of intelligence about great men, however trifling it may be, this information will be acceptable, that while at Harrow, his profuse habits acquired for him the nick-name of Lord Squander.

Poets, like lovers, are notoriously fickle, but Lord B. has even exceeded the usual instability of his brethren. In the preface to the first edition of his "Hours of Idleness," he said, "My wreath, scanty as it must be, is all I shall derive from these productions; and I shall never attempt to replace its fading leaves, or pluck a single additional sprig from groves, where I am, at best, an intruder. It is highly improbable, from my situation, and pursuits hereafter, that I shall ever obtrude myself a second time on the public; nor, even in the very doubtful event of present indulgence, shall I be tempted to commit a future trespass of the same nature."—In his "English Bards," he expressed a similar determination:—

"I, quite content, no more shall interpose
To stun mankind with poetry or prose."

And in the preface or dedication to a subsequent poem (his "Corsair," I think), he renewed his vows of abandoning the occupation of poetry; perhaps, also, in half a dozen other places that have escaped my recollection. How well he has kept his word need not be said.

COWPER, in one of his fits of melancholy, composed the following exquisitely pathetic lines, which, we believe, have not hitherto been incorporated with any collection of his poems. The heart in which the perusal of them excites no compassion, will never be affected by any thing:—

Doom'd as I am in solitude to waste
The present moments, and regret the past;
Depriv'd of ev'ry joy I valued most,
My friend torn from me, and my mistress lost

Call not this gloom I wear, this anxious
mien,

The dull effect of humour or of spleen!
Still, still I mourn, with each returning
day,

Him snatch'd by fate, in early youth away;
And her, thro' tedious years of doubt and
pain,

Fixed in her choice and faithful—but in
vain!—

Oh! prone to pity, gen'rous and sincere,
Whose eye ne'er yet refus'd the wretch
a tear;

Whose heart the real claim of friendship
knows,

Nor thinks a lover's are but fancied woes;
See me, ere yet my destin'd course half
done,

Cast forth a wand'rer on a world un-
known!

See me neglected on the world's rude
coast,

Each dear companion of my voyage lost!
Nor ask why clouds of sorrow shade my
brow,

And ready tears wait only leave to flow!
Why all that soothes a heart from an-
guish free,

All that delights the happy—palls on me.

MILTON, I suspect, is generally be-
lieved by the gay and thoughtless to
have been an austere crabbed Puritan,
hostile to all the elegancies and enjoy-
ments of life, but this is a great mis-
take. His love for music, for instance,
was glowing and profound. Take
from among other testimonies in its
praise, the following fine passage from
his "Tractate on Education," which
of itself is music:—

"The interval of convenient rest
after meat, may both with profit and
delight, be taken up in recreating and
composing the travell'd spirits, with
the solemn and divine harmonies of
music, heard or learnt: either while
the skilful organist plies his grave and
fancied descant in lofty fugues, or the
whole symphony, with artful and un-
imaginable touches, does adorn and
grace the well-studied chords of some
choice composer; sometimes the lute,
or soft organ-stop, waiting on elegant
voices, either to religious, martial, or
civil ditties, which have power over
dispositions and manners, to smooth
and make them gentle, from rustic
harshness and distempered passions."

See, also, his delightful Sonnet, addressed to his friend Lawrence.

SCOTT.—It was the following statement which appeared in the newspapers in the month of September, 1805, that suggested to Scott the idea of his poem entitled "Helvellyn:—"

"A shepherd of Mr. Mounsey's, in looking after his sheep upon the summit of the stupendous mountain of Helvellyn, was alarmed by the barking of a dog; and, upon going to the spot from whence it proceeded, found the arms, thighs, and some other bones of a man, robbed of their flesh, and bleached as white as snow. The arm-bones were covered by a pair of tattered black coat sleeves; upon examining further, he found a gold watch and a pocket-book, in which were papers, that led to the discovery of his name, which is Gough. He was a gentleman of fortune, in Manchester; and used, every year, to ramble on these mountains, fishing among the tarns. He has never been seen since last April; so he must have lain at the foot of the precipice, down which he had fallen, since that time. There is no appearance of his little dog having had any other subsistence than grass, for it undoubtedly would not feed upon its master; but the flesh had been consumed by maggots. What is extraordinary, the poor little animal had pupped during this time; one pup was dead by its side, the others have probably been carried off by birds of prey."

Interesting Varieties.

STANZAS,

BY MRS. CORNWELL BARON WILSON.

Yes! once I own I lov'd thee,
With purest flame, with purest flame;
The smiles of beauty mov'd me,
Let stoics blame, let stoics blame!
Ay! let them scorn Love's tender theme,
And with cold hearts such lays deride;
One hour of youth's romantic dream
Is worth an age of life beside!

When Hope's soft voice was singing
Her sweetest lay, her sweetest lay;
And smiles, like flowers, were springing
Around my way, around my way!

Then first, in joyous hour we met,
With bosoms light, from sorrow free;
Nor did I dream that dark regret,
Would ever rise at thought of thee!

'Twas in youth's summer season,
When hearts were gay, when hearts
were gay;
Before the waud of reason,
Chased hope away, chased hope away,
That first this bosom felt love's power,
And worship'd at his fairy shrine;
Nor ever thought that luckless hour
Would be the source of griefs like mine.

That sunny time pass'd over,
And life grew dark, and life grew dark;
And fate soon left thy lover,
A stranded bark, a stranded bark;
Of all his early glories 'rest,
On life's rude ocean, dark and dim;
With not one friendly harbour left,
Or welcome port, to shelter him!

Still, in that hour of sorrow,
When fortune frown'd, when fortune
frown'd,
His heart one hope could borrow,
To look around, to look around;
It was the blissful thought of thee,
As in life's bright, unclouded day,
That lighten'd all the misery
That track'd the wanderer's weary way.

Yet this last hope was blighted,
So fate decreed, so fate decreed:
For THOU, like others, slighted
The bruised reed, the bruised reed!
Yes! THOU wert like that faithless thing,
The blue-wing'd bird of distant isles,
That only spreads its painted wing,
And breathes its song, when Phœbus
smiles!

Yes! once I own I lov'd thee,
Alas! too well, alas! too well;
How faithless I have prov'd thee,
I will not tell, I will not tell.
Let stoics scorn Love's tender theme,
And turn away their eyes of pride:
Give me one hour of passion's dream,
'Tis worth an age of life beside!

QUIBBLES.—The following line, copied from an old book, doubtless cost the author much foolish labour, for it is a perfect verse, and each word is the same both backwards and forwards:—

"Odo tenet mulum, madidam mappam.
tenet Anna."

The two lines that follow are very artfully contrived to express a double meaning, each in perfect opposition to the other:—

Prospicimus modo quod durabunt tempore longo

*Fœdera; nec patriæ pax cito diffugiet.**

If the reader just reverse the order, by beginning with the last words, the whole conveys a contrary meaning—

Diffugiet cito pax patriæ; nec fœdera longo

*Tempore durabunt quod modo prospicimus.**

A young lady named TASWELL returned the annexed reply to an invitation to "Tea and Cards:—"

Your kind invitation I hail'd with much glee,

Will be true to the hour, ne'er doubt it;
Play a rubber at whist; but as for the T,
I should surely be AS-WELL without it.

LATIN-ENGLISH VERSES,

COPIED FROM AN ANCIENT MS.

THERE was a man, whose name was
semper idem;

And by his trade hewas mercator quidem,
He had a wife, who was not tall nor
brevis,

But by her actions she was counted levis.
He, to content her, gave her all things
satis;

She, to requite him, made him a cuck-
old gratis.

EPITAPH

IN THE CHURCH-YARD OF THETFORD,
NORFOLK.

My Grandmother was buried here,
My Cousin Jane, and two Uncles dear.

My Father perish'd with a mortification
in his thighs,

My Sister dropped down dead in the
Minories.

* In the works of John Taylor, the Water Poet, 1630, p. 266, there occurs the subjoined piece of laborious ingenuity, upon which he greatly prided himself:—

"Lewd did I live, and evil I did dwell."

"This line," says he, "is the same backward as it is forward, and I will give any man five shillings a piece for as many as he can make."

But the reason why I am here (according to my thinking)

Is owing to my good living and hard drinking.

If therefore, good Christians, you wish to live long,

Beware of drinking brandy, or anything strong.

THE SPHINX.

NO. IV.

QUERY.

A MAN has a small boat, in which he is to convey across a river, a Wolf, a Cabbage, and a Goat, without being able to take more than one of them at a time. Which of them then must he carry over first, so that during one of his crossings the wolf shall not eat the goat, nor the goat the cabbage?

CLIO.

RIDDLE.

SIR,—The following unintelligible lines, which seem to me to be poetry, I found in the Park last week. I should be greatly obliged to some of your correspondents, who perhaps may know what language they are written in, if they would give me the meaning thereof in plain English.

CURIOSUS.

TWAH SI AMN ?

OT ady eh's reds'd ni ogld nad islvre
ghbrit,

PWarp'd ni a orsdhu ofrbee otmorrow
gniht.

OT ady eh's faetsnig no lodeiideu odof,
OTormowr gunhot eh atse acn od imh
ogod.

OT yad e'sh ceni, nda corsns ot efed no
mucts,

Ni a wfe adys misshle a sidh orf romws:
OT dya hs'e nodurho nda ni rgeta seteme,
OTormrwo ton a arbge avulse mih!

OT yad sih sheou'oth agrel eh ntihs oto
mlasi,

OTomrwr nac mmcodan no ehufs ta lal.

OT dya sah wyetnt rvesatns ta ihs ateg,
OTomrwr rcaseyic eno liiw gdien ot
twia.

OT dya repnfm'd dna eswte sa yan eros,
OTormrwo kstnis ni yerve oilmras enos.

OT yda s'eh angrd, ajmisetc, lal gdletih,
Hatsyl nad epla ebrleo ot mrorwo
gnhit.

Wou hnew oyu'ev rtwoe nda a'is hawt-
ree uoy nac,
Sith si eth sobt taht yuo nac yas fo namt.

CONUNDRUMS.

1. Why is a dog biting his tail, a good economist?
2. In which month do ladies talk least?
3. What is the difference between fish alive and live fish?
4. Why is an old woman who can't work and don't work, like a young woman who can work and does work?
5. Why is a feeble old man like a nail driven up to the head in a post?
6. Why is a wall-eye like a note of interrogation?

(Solutions to the above will be found at p. 247.)

The Wit's Nunchion.

SEDUCTION.—At the commencement of the American war, when France appeared inclined to assist the Colonists, Sir J. Yorke, the English Ambassador in the Netherlands, meeting the French Ambassador at the Hague, said to him, "You have been guilty of a dishonourable act—no less than that of debauching our daughter."—"I am sorry," replied the Frenchman, "that your Excellency puts so severe a construction upon the matter; she made the first advances, and absolutely threw herself into our arms; but, if matrimony will make any atonement, we are ready to act honourably, and marry her."

REPARTEE.—Lord Byron once made an application to a certain conscientious usurer for a loan of money, which Moses, not seeing any very sound security, begged to decline, and stated as his reason, that he was at the time out of cash, in consequence of having made a large donation to the poor. "You have been giving money to the poor have you?" said his lordship, "then I am sure you will lend me some; I have scriptural authority for it."—"How so?" said the man of Obits. "Why, do you not know,

that 'He who giveth to the poor, lendeth to THE LORD?'"

THE master of an American vessel, shortly after the independence of the American Colonies was acknowledged, being in London, fell in with some sharpers, who persuaded him to join them in drinking a bottle or two of porter. After they had all drunk very freely, the rogues dropped off, one by one, till the Yankee was left alone. The publican coming in, said to him, "I suppose you are not much acquainted with our English blades."—"I am not," replied the American.—"Well," said the publican, "the reckoning falls on you"—"Does it?" exclaimed the other, affecting surprise, and putting his hand in his pocket, as if to pay—but pausing, he said, "Well, if that's the case, give me another bottle before I go." The publican stepped out to get it. In the meantime the American wrote on the table, "I leave you American handles for English blades," and walked off in his turn.

JAMES FERGUSON, the mathematician, was once in a stage-coach with a rigid Calvinist, who continually quoted passages from the bible in a most incoherent and disconnected manner, triumphantly exclaiming on each occasion "Is not that Scripture?" Disgusted at this mode of Argument, Ferguson at length said, "By this method of reasoning, you may prove any thing,—for instance, the duty of suicides."—"How so?" exclaimed the scripture-quoter. "Easily enough (said the mathematician); 'Judas went and hanged himself,' is not that Scripture; 'Go and do thou likewise!' is not that Scripture also?"

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—George, J., Selim, R.P.C., Timothy, and Somers Town. "Bill Jones" shall be inserted.

None of the Poems mentioned by Tremor came to hand.

THE NIC-NAO;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 30.

SATURDAY, JUNE 21, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKSPEARE.

RED BULL THEATRE, ST. JOHN STREET.



HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE, SECTION 7.—Two only of the Theatres included in our list now remain to be described. The 10th in order, viz. the Cock-Pit or Phoenix in Drury Lane, had originally been dedicated to the purpose denoted by its first title, and derived its second from the circumstance of the fabulous bird, the Phoenix, having been chosen for its sign when it was converted into a playhouse. It was situated opposite the Castle Tavern, and there is still in existence a passage from Drury Lane into Great Wild Street called Cock-Pit Alley. Probably, too, Phoenix Alley, leading from Long Acre into Hart Street, Covent Garden, derived its title from the neighbouring Theatre.

On the 4th May, 1617, the house was pulled down by the populace. A mob of persons smitten with the love of morality, began to attack all bagnios, and extended their reformation to this Theatre, which they demolished, many persons being killed and wounded by the falling of the walls, &c. It appears from a letter sent on the occasion by the Privy Council to the Lord Mayor and Justices, that the mob consisted of many thousands. The house was speedily rebuilt, and was one of those which escaped the fury of the Fanatics in 1648, as the performance of plays was recommenced here about the period of the Restoration, as will hereafter be noticed.

The Red Bull, which probably was so called from its displaying a painting of that animal, as a sign, was a large house, standing on a plot of ground called Red-Bull Yard, near the northern end of St. John's Street, Clerkenwell. This name the place retained till towards the end of the last century, when it was christened Woodbridge Street, the land; and tenements thereon, belonging to the town of Woodbridge in Suffolk. It is a narrow, dirty avenue, the first turning on the left, above Aylesbury Street. The appearance of the buildings in it is extremely antiquated, but, as may be imagined, all traces of the theatre have long disappeared. "The exact spot it occupied," says the edi-

tor of the *Londina Illustrata*, "I have not been able to trace, but it may easily be guessed, and is perhaps exactly pointed out in ancient leases. The parish-books of Clerkenwell throw no light upon the subject, as they contain only documents of a recent date."

According to tradition this was the theatre at which Shakspeare held gentlemen's horses for hire, on his first arrival in London, though 'tis more than probable that the whole story is a mere fable. During the civil wars, the house was highly celebrated for the representation of what were called Drolls, viz. selections from the comic scenes of Shakspeare, Fletcher, &c. by one Robert Cox. A collection of these, published in 1672, has a view of the interior, as a frontispiece, which is extremely curious and valuable from being the only representation extant of the internal appearance of one of our earliest theatres. A faithful copy of it embellishes this number of our work. The figures on the stage are—1. Sir John Falstaff, from which it will be seen that the knight's original costume has descended to the present day with little variation, though his obesity has been mightily increased. Fig. 2, is Dame Quickly; fig 3, Clause, from Beaumont and Fletcher's "Beggar's Bush." Fig. 4, is The French Dancing-Master, from the Duke of Newcastle's comedy called "Variety;" and Figs: 5 and 6, are the Changeling and the Simpleton, from pieces written by Cox himself. The figure coming from behind the curtain, with a label from his mouth, represents Green, a celebrated comedian of the time, who in a comedy written by one Cooke, having to represent a character called Bubble, who to every compliment, replies "Tu Quoque," played it with so much ability, that the author out of gratitude named his piece after him, and it has ever since been called "Green's Tu Quoque." Our copy of this curious cut has been made with great attention to accuracy, and the readers of the NIC-NAC thus possess for a mere trifle a fac-simile of a print which is scarcely procurable at any price.

In the latter end of 1659, some months before the restoration of Charles the Second, the theatres began to revive, and several plays were acted at the Red Bull in that and the following year, previous to the king's arrival. The performers, who afterwards were called The King's Servants, and of whom the present Drury-Lane Company may be looked upon as the legitimate descendants, continued to play here until 1660, when they removed to a house in Gibbon's Tennis-court, Vere Street, Clare-market. We shall resume our account of their operations at the proper period. As no mention of any performances at the Red Bull, after this period occurs, it is to be presumed that it was either converted to some other purpose, or suffered to fall gradually into decay. A passage, indeed, in the Preface to the collection of Drolls, above-described, seems to shew that it even then (1672) had ceased to exist; the writer says, "I have seen the Red Bull playhouse (which was a large one) so full, that as many went back for want of room, as had entered." This, however, may perhaps be thought to prove no more than that the house was then no longer made use of as a theatre.—(Resumed at page 249.)

ENGLISH GLADIATORS.

SIR,—As a sequel to your history of the Amphitheatres for Bear-baiting on Bankside, I offer you the following account of a gladiatorial combat on the same spot, in the reign of Charles the Second, translated from a very scarce French work, called "A Description of England, by M. Jorevin de Rocheford," published at Paris, in 3 vols. 12mo. 1672.

HIGHGATE,

G. SNEYD.

"We went to see the Bear-Garden at Southwark, which is a great amphitheatre, where combats are fought between all sorts of animals, and sometimes men, as we once saw. Commonly, when any fencing-masters are desirous of shewing their courage and their great skill, they issue mutual challenges, and before they engage, parade the town, with drums and

trumpets sounding, to inform the public there is a challenge between two brave masters of the science of self-defence, and that the battle will be fought on such a day. We went to see one of these combats, which was performed on a stage, in the middle of this amphitheatre, where, on the flourishes of trumpets, and the beat of drums, the combatants entered, stripped to their shirts. On a signal from the drum, they drew their swords, and immediately began the fight, skirmishing for a long time without any wounds. They were both very skilful and courageous. The tallest had in some respects the advantage over the least; for, according to the English fashion of fencing, they endeavoured rather to cut, than push in the French manner, so that by his height he had the advantage of being able to strike his antagonist on the head, against which the little one was on his guard. He had in his turn the advantage over the great one, in being able to give him the jarnac stroke, by cutting him on his right hand, which he left in a manner quite unguarded: so that, all things considered, they were pretty equally matched. Nevertheless, the tall one struck his antagonist on the wrist, which he almost cut off; but this did not prevent him from continuing the fight, after the hurt had been dressed, and he had taken a glass or two of wine, to give him courage, when he took ample vengeance for his wound; for, a little afterwards, making a feint at his adversary's ham, the tall man, stooping in order to parry it, laid his whole head open, when the little one gave him a stroke, which took off a slice of his head, and almost all his ear. For my part, I think there is an inhumanity, a barbarity, a cruelty, in permitting men to kill each other for the diversion of spectators. The surgeons immediately dressed and bound up the wound; which being done, they resumed the combat, and both being sensible of their respective disadvantages, they were a long time without giving or receiving another wound, till the little one, tired with this long battle, failing to parry ex-

actly, received a stroke on his injured wrist, which dividing the sinews, he remained vanquished, and the tall conqueror received the applause of the spectators. For my part, I should have had more pleasure in seeing the battle of the Bears and Dogs, which was fought the following day, on the same theatre."

SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

At the present moment, when a sour melancholy band of sectarians are exerting all their energies to suppress the harmless amusements of the common people, we think a republication of King James the First's sensible Proclamation for the encouragement of Sports, will not be deemed unreasonable by any friend of cheerfulness and rational recreation. We have no wish to advocate such brutal practices as bull and badger-baiting, or cock-fighting, nor to see liberty degenerate into licentiousness; but we do think that the people ought to be allowed to indulge in wrestling-parties, walking-matches, and similar athletic sports, without the constant interposition of magistrates to prevent them; and while the great are permitted to enjoy routs, races, field sports, masquerades, subscription-houses, French plays, &c. without restraint, the humble should be allowed their walks, fairs, and merry-makings, unmolested by unnecessary and vexatious legal restrictions. We might say a great deal more upon this subject, but the few observations we have thrown out will afford a sufficient explanation of the feelings which have induced us to reprint the following curious composition; and it is, moreover, a fixed rule of the NIC-NAC to avoid as much as possible every species of remark which may tend to excite angry feeling, or lead to dull discussion.

The Proclamation, it will be seen, is taken from a copy put forth in 1633, with a recommendatory introduction, by Charles the First, who found it necessary to revive his father's wholesome injunctions, to check in some degree the hateful growth of Puritanical prejudices. We shall be able to give the whole in two numbers of

our work; and, should our readers approve of the plan, we intend to present them with some more reprints of rare tracts, some of which, when brought to sale, often produce as many pounds as they consist of pages.

THE KING'S MAJESTIES DECLARATION to his Subjects, concerning **LAWFULL SPORTS** to be used.

Imprinted at London, by Robert Barker, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Maestie, and by the Assignes of John Bill, 1633. 4to. p. 18.

BY THE KING.

Our deare father of blessed memory, in his return from Scotland, coming through Lancashire, found that his subjects were debarred from Lawfull Recreations upon Sundayes; after Evening Prayers ended, and vpon Holy dayes: and, he prudently considered, that if these times were taken from them, the meaner sort, who labour hard all the weeke, should have no Recreations at all to refresh their spirits; and, after his returne, hee farther saw that his loyall subjects, in all other parts of his kingdome, did suffer in the same kinde, though perhaps not in the same degree; and, did therefore, in his princely wisdom, publish a DECLARATION to all his louing subjects concerning lawfull sports to be vsed at such times, which was printed and published, by his Royall Commandment, in the yeere 1618, in the tenor which hereafter followeth:—

"BY THE KING.

WHEREAS, upon Our returne, the last yere, out of Scotland, We did publish Our pleasure touching the recreations of Our people in those parts, under Our hand, for some causes us thereunto moouing, Wee have thought good to command these our Directions then given in Lancashire, with a few words thereunto added, and most applicable to these parts of Our Realmes, to be published to all our Subjects.

"WHEREAS Wee did iustly, in Our Progressse through Lancashire, rebuke some Puritanes and precise people, and tooke order that the like

unlawfull carriage should not be used by any of them hereafter, in the prohibiting and unlawfull punishing of Our good people for using their lawfull Recreations and honest exercises vpon Sundayes and other Holydayes; after the afternoone Sermon or Seruice, Wee now finde that two sorts of people wherewith that Countrey is much infected (Wee meane Papists and Puritanes) have maliciously traduced and calumniated those our iust and honourable proceedings. And therefore, lest our reputation might vpon the one side (though innocently) haue some aspersion layd (vpon it, and that vpon the other part, our good people in that Countrey be not misled, by the mistaking and misinterpretation of Our meaning, we have therefore thought good hereby to cleare and make Our pleasure to be manifested to all Our good people in those parts.

"It is, true that, at our first entry to this Crowne, and Kingdome, Wee were informed, and that too truly, that Our County of Lancashire abounded more in Popish Recusants than any County of England; and thus hath still continued since, to Our great regret; with little amendment; save that, now of late, in Our last riding through our said county, Wee find, both by the report of the judges, and of the Bishop of that Diocesse, that there is some amendment now daily beginning, which is no small contentment to Us.

"The report of this growing amendment amongst them, made Us the more sorry, when, with our owne eares we heard the generall complaint of our people, that they were barred from all lawfull Recreation and exercise vpon the Sundayes afternoone, after the ending of all Divine Seruice, which cannot but produce two evils: the one, the hindering of the conuersion of many, whom their Priests will take occasion hereby to vexe, perswading them that no honest mirth or recreation is lawfull or tolerable in our Religion, which cannot but breed a great discontentment in our peoples hearts, especially of such as are peradventure vpon the point of turning. The other

inconuenience is, that this prohibition barreth the common and meaner sort of people from using such exercises as may make their bodies more able for warre, when wee, or our Successours, shall haue occasion to use them; and, in place thereof, sets up filthy tiplings and drunkenness, and breeds a number of idle and discontented speeches in their alehouses. For, when shall the common people haue leaue to exercise, if not vpon the Sundayes and Holy daies, seeing they must apply their labour and win their living in all working-daies?—(Concluded at p. 251.)

ANTEDILUVIAN REMAINS.

THE enormous skeletons discovered at various periods in America, demonstrate the former existence of animals far surpassing in size any at present known. In fact, these remains evince that the most gigantic quadrupeds now in existence are mere pigmies, compared with some of the ancient inhabitants of the western world; but of these, perhaps nothing more will ever be known than the bones above-mentioned. The following tradition relating to them is still in existence amongst the native Indians. It is given in the very terms of a Shawanee, and shews that the impressions produced by these monsters were most forcible:—

"Ten thousand moons ago, when nought but gloomy forests covered this land of the sleeping sun, long before the pale men, with thunder and fire at their command, rushed on the wings of the wind to ruin this garden of nature,—when nought but the untamed wanderers of the woods, and men as unrestrained as they, were the lords of the soil,—a race of animals were in being, huge as the frowning precipice, cruel as the bloody panther, swift as the descending eagle, and terrible as the angel of night. The pines crashed beneath their feet, and the lake shrunk when they slaked their thirst; the forceful javelin in vain was hurled, and the barbed arrow fell harmless from their sides; Forests were laid waste at a meal;

the groans of expiring animals were every where heard ; and whole villages, inhabited by men, were destroyed in a moment. The cry of universal distress extended even to the region of peace in the west, and the good spirit interposed to save the unhappy. The forked lightning gleamed all around, and loudest thunder rocked the globe. The bolts of heaven were hurled upon the cruel destroyers alone, and the mountains echoed with the howlings of death. All were killed except one male, the fiercest of the race, and him even the artillery of the skies assailed in vain. He ascended the bluest summit which shades the source of the Monongahela, and, roaring aloud, bid defiance to every vengeance. The red lightning scorched the lofty firs, and rived the knotty oaks, but only glanced upon the enraged monster. At length, maddened with fury, he leaped over the waves of the west at a bound, and at this moment reigns the uncontrolled monarch of the wilderness, in despite of even Omnipotence itself."

Interesting Varieties.

MIDWIVES.—Writers against the employment of men in midwifery, should take for their text the subjoined extract from the preface to Gray's "Supplement to the Pharmacopæia," 1821:—"The union of midwifery with apothecary practice does not, from the Bills of Mortality, appear to be attended with those advantages to the female sex that might reasonably be expected to arise from the union of modern physiological theory with practice ; since, in the thirty years from 1728 to 1758, during which women were almost exclusively employed, out of 759,122 deaths, only 6,481 took place in child-bed, or rather more than eight in a thousand ; while in the eight years from 1807 to 1814, when men-midwives were as exclusively employed, out of 147,304 deaths, there were 1404 in child-bed, or little less than ten in a thousand, which when extended to the mortality of the whole kingdom, is an annual increase

of 250 deaths in child-bed. This can scarcely be attributed to any other cause, than that the apothecary is unconsciously led to unduly hasten the delivery, or that he serves as a medium of communicating febrile contagion, to which females at such a period are peculiarly liable."

MEDICINES, says the same writer, must in most cases be made unpalatable, lest the patient should conceive himself to be furnished with mere slops, for the sake of a charge being made!!!

TO TEMPER STEEL.

A correspondent says, "Having bought a handsome knife, and paid handsomely for it, I found that whenever I attempted to cut wood, or any hard substance, the edge broke. This accident, often repeated, soon made a mere saw of my blade. I complained to the cutler, who very seriously assured me that it was a sure sign of the goodness of the steel ; he finished by sharpening it, for which he charged me sixpence. This grinding became so frequently necessary, that my knife was reduced to the size of a large needle. A new blade was then fitted to the handle, but this also proved of too brittle a temper, and the same accident happened to it. My patience now became exhausted, and I almost despaired of ever possessing a serviceable knife, when an itinerant grinder of scissors gave me an effectual receipt, viz.—to plunge the blade up to the handle in boiling fat, for two hours, and then, taking it out, to let it cool gradually. I followed his directions, and my knife now cuts the hardest wood without being damaged ; its edge resists even bone."

THE STRANGER'S GRAVE.

BY J. WILMINGTON FLEMING.

In the cleft of yon rock, whose stern front threatens danger,
Where the wild waters beat, and the hollow winds sigh,
Unhallowed, unwept, is the grave of the stranger
Who came a wan exile, unfriended to die.

No wife, and no child, to his cold pillow
creeping,
Bathes the flint with the pure drops
affection is weeping.
But the eagle his throne on that cold
breast is keeping,
Whose emotions once flutter'd as
proudly and high!

He came, whence we knew not; his
stern brow was clouded
With the hue of misfortune, or dark
lines of crime;
No compassion he woo'd, but all lonely
and shrouded,
He rovd' like some spirit, all dark, yet
sublime!
It seem'd, that the plough-share of fate
had past o'er him,
And the world, a wild desert, frown'd
sternly before him;
His heart too was dead, nor could pity
restore him
Those joys which had wither'd from
passion or time.

One night, when the wild surge in moun-
tains was dashing,
And the storm madly burst o'er the
lone crags around,
On yon steep, by the glare of the blue
lightnings' flashing,
The sad and cold corse of the stranger
was found.
The eyes were unclos'd, and in death's
horrid glaring
Spoke the spirit's departure was wild
and despairing,
As if on life's threshold, his nature's
proud daring
Had some image of horror or agony
found!

We laid him to sleep where his spirit
departed,
In the womb of the rock, where the
air-monarchs hide;
Chill horror crept o'er us, but no soft
tear started,
Nor sound stole around, save the wave's
sullen tide.
Years have past since that night, yet
our fathers could never
The dark, silent veil of his mystery
sever,
And lonely he sleeps in his rude bed,
for ever,
The man of misfortune, of guilt, or of
pride!

The Wit's Nunchion.

GENERAL W—, when past eighty

years of age, married a very amiable
young lady of about eighteen. He
was an acquaintance of Kant's, the
philosopher, whom he informed of his
having married, adding, "I don't
think I have to hope for any children."
"Certainly not," rejoined Kant,
"but to fear."

SIMPLICITY.—A silly clergyman ob-
served to his auditors, that it was one
proof of the wise and benevolent dis-
positions of Providence, that the
greatest rivers were always seen to
flow past the most populous towns!

HEBREW AVARICE—During the re-
treat of the French from Russia in
1812, the city of Wilna was left so
full of dead, that a contract was made
with the Jews to cleanse the town, and
carry out the pestilential bodies. They
were to receive five silver copecks for
each corpse; but, not content with
the profit on the dead, they were de-
tected in throwing the dying out of
the windows of the hospitals, to swell
the amount.

EPITAPH ON A MAN WHO WAS DROWNED.

As I went in, to wash my skin,
Amongst the chubs and eels,
A saucy jack, with slippery back,
Did trip up both my heels.

Thus, in a hole, my precious soul
Was parted from my carcass;
And like a trout was dragged out,—
Oh, was not that a hard case?

EPITAPH,

ON A BREWER, DROWNED IN HIS
OWN VAT.

INTERR'D in Earth, John Porter lieth
here,—
A riddle—for his was a WATERY BIER.

AN Irishman was tried for stealing a
cow. The fact was proved by THREE
credible witnesses, who saw him com-
mit the robbery; but the prisoner
produced TWENTY witnesses, who
swore that THEY did NOT see him do
it. The Jury accordingly acquitted
the culprit.

READY WIT.—Some gentlemen in Ireland discoursing about the quickness of reply ascribed to the lower orders of that country, it was resolved to put the matter to the test in the person of a clown who was approaching them. "Pat," said one of them, "if the Devil were to come, and be determined to have either you or me, which do you think he would take?" "Me to be sure," said Pat. "And why so?"—"Because he knows he can have your honour at any time."

Fox owed a tradesman a considerable sum of money, which had long been applied for in vain. This tradesman had a friend, who was a servant of Fox's, and who gave him notice one day that his master was flush of cash, having been successful at hazard on the preceding night. He took the hint, and waited on the orator in person, for payment of a note of hand which had been given for the debt, when the following dialogue ensued: "Sir, I really can't pay it."—"I hope you will, Mr. Fox, as I happen to know you have just now plenty of money."—"That's true; but I have so many debts of honour to discharge in the first instance that you must wait."—"Well then, Mr. Fox (**PUTTING THE NOTE IN THE FIRE**), now mine is a debt of honour." The money was directly paid.

FINE LANGUAGE.—A man should endeavour always to accommodate his discourse to the intellects of his hearers, and, when in company with uneducated persons, be careful not to bewilder them by the use of abstruse epithets, or a display of learning. The neglect of this will be often productive of inconvenience, as was some time since exemplified in the case of a sergeant in the country, who, priding himself somewhat upon his knowledge of grammar, exclaimed one morning, whilst drilling his men—"As you were!"—Not a finger, however, moved, till the sergeant thus explained himself—"My lads,

when I says 'As you were.' I means 'As you was!'"

IMMORALITY.—One of the right reverend Bench having charitably established an alms-house, at his own expence, for twenty-five poor women; Lord Mansfield, in his juvenile days, was applied to for an inscription to be placed over the portal; upon which he took up his pencil, and wrote the following:—

Under this roof
the Lord Bishop of—
keeps
no less than twenty-five women.

GENUINE Postscript to a Letter from an Irish Gentleman to his Son at School.—N. B.—Your mother, ever mindful of you, sends you half-a-guinea; carefully put under the seal of this letter; let me advise you, therefore, to open it carefully, or you may lose this her kind remembrance of you before you find it.

A FRENCH gentleman, in the city of New York, at a party, was requested to sing; he was an excellent singer, and knew many English songs, but his pronunciation of the language was very broken; he began a song, the chorus of which was—

You'll call a guardian angel down
To watch me in the battle.

But instead of rendering the words of the last line, he altered their signification entirely, and sang thus:—

You'll call a garden angel down,
To wash me in de bottle.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—D., Alatus, Sarah, E. T., J. B., Humphrey Short, W. T. E., R. P., G. Simkins, Carolus, Atrides, and Menelaus. The communications relating to the SPHINX shall be more fully noticed next week. Alatus should have explained the principle upon which his cipher is composed. D. is disposed to be waggish.

A letter lies at the Office for CURSUS.

THE NIG-NAG;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 31.

SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



TORTURE OF THE BOOT!

Most of our readers have doubtless, at some period or another, experienced the inconvenience of a tight boot; but few of them, perhaps, are aware that a species of punishment, called the Torture of the Boot, was anciently inflicted on contumacious criminals. One or both of the legs of the sufferer being placed in a case made of iron, or of four boards strongly bound together with cords, wedges were then

driven in to crush his limbs, with a degree of severity proportioned to the nature of his offence. The honour of having invented this diabolical instrument is due to the French. It found its way to Scotland in the 15th or 16th century, and was frequently employed in that country to extort confessions from criminals, or glut the vengeance of victors upon their conquered enemies. Amongst the Har-

leian MSS. there is a letter from a Mr. T. Randolph to Lord Hunsdon, which says, "George Flecke had yesterday night **THE BOOTS**, and is said to have confessed that the E. of Morton was privy to the poisoning the E. of Athol, 16th March, 1580;" and in another letter it is mentioned that "the Laird of Whittingham had **THE BOOTS**, but, without torment, confessed."

A short time before the accession of James I. to the crown of England, this species of torture was inflicted, in his presence, upon Dr. Fian, a supposed wizard, who was charged with raising the storms that the king had encountered in his return from Denmark. In a very curious pamphlet, which contains an account of this circumstance, it is stated, that "hee was, with all convenient speed, by commandement, conuained againe to the torment of **THE BOOTS**, wherein he continued a long time, and did abide so many blowes in them, that his legges were crushte and beaten together as small as might bee, and the bones and flesh so brused, that the blood and marrowe spouted forth in great abundance, whereby they were made unserviceable for ever." The miserable sufferer was afterwards burned.

This villainous engine continued occasionally to be used in Scotland till towards the end of the 17th century. Bishop Burnet mentions one Hugh McKaile, a young preacher of Edinburgh, who, being suspected of treasonable practices, underwent the punishment so late as December 1666. "He was put to the torture (says Burnet) which in Scotland they call **THE BOOTS**, for they put a pair of iron boots close on the leg, and drive wedges between these and the leg. The common torture was only to drive these in the calf of the leg, but I have been told they were sometimes driven upon the shin-bone." There is extant a history of this McKaile, which tells us, that being apprehended with a sword in his hand, he was brought to examination before the Privy Council of Scotland, December 4, 1666, when they ordered the exe-

cutioner to put his leg into **THE BOOT**, and proceed to the torture. The violent compression of his flesh, sinews, and bones, by force of the wedge and hammer, even to ten or eleven strokes, with considerable intervals, produced no further confession than what he had before made, viz.—that he had joined the treasonable party, and was deserting them when apprehended. He was afterwards hanged at Edinburgh.

In this account of his life, it is asserted that the torture of the boot had not been practised before in Scotland, within the memory of any person living; but being then introduced, "and violently urged by the prelates," it was afterwards frequently used, until the Revolution, when, "with other inhuman and barbarous punishments, it was justly complained of, and abrogated."

The torture of **THE BOOT** was inflicted upon Ravillac, the assassin of Henry the VIIIth, and its application in France appears to have been common, though we rejoice to say we have met with no mention of its use in our own country, at any period. The curious representation of the instrument prefixed to this article, is copied from Milloens's "*Praxis Criminis Persequendi*," Paris, 1541, folio.

ANECDOTES OF BUONAPARTE.

EVERY particular relative to the deceased Emperor has been so carefully collected of late, that little remains to be gleaned. The subjoined anecdote, however, may be somewhat more novel to our readers than many of those recently published with great parade of originality:—

The Duchess of L—M— had an inveterate hatred of every thing connected with the ~~agent~~ nobility. She had acquired the feeling from her husband, who detested this class of citizens, and especially the emigrants. He had exerted all his efforts to dissuade Buonaparte from recalling them to France, and, above all, from placing them about his person: he had even many warm disputes on the subject

with the Empress Josephine, who protected them. He took no pains to conceal this aversion, and the emigrants, who were acquainted with his enmity, returned it very sincerely. One day, when a pretty considerable number of them were together, in a saloon in the Thuilleries, through which he had to pass to the Emperor, they affected to place themselves before him, so as to intercept his passage; the general instantly drew his sabre, swearing he would cut off the ears of any one who should stand in his way; this was sufficient, they immediately made room to let him pass, for they knew he was very capable of keeping his word.

On another occasion, the valet de chambre who announced him to the Emperor, having requested him to wait till M. de Colonne, who was in conference with his Majesty, had quit- ted his cabinet, he in a rage seized a stool, which he threw at a chandelier, and which, having broken it to pieces, struck against a pier-glass, which was shivered by the stroke. At this unexpected noise Buonaparte ran out, and received from the general, who was irritated almost to madness, the bitterest and most unmeasured reproaches. "Is it then for emigrants," cried he, "that the defenders of the country are put aside! Is it to caress the enemies of the national throne that its supporters are humbled! Well," continued he, growing more and more angry, and resuming with the emperor the tone of familiarity to which he was used some years before, "you always will follow your own way; but you will repent of it. The emigrants! they are traitors; they were so to their country, to their King, whom they suffered to be murdered; they will be so to yourself; you will lead them with favours, and they will assassinate you, if they have an opportunity."—This sally brought upon him a temporary exile.

When Buonaparte was in Germany, in 1805, a celebrated mechanic, named Kempfeler, was appointed to exhibit to him an artificial arm, with which a person who had suffered amputation might perform all the motions of the

natural limb. The artist was also to show, on this occasion, the Automaton chess-player, exhibited in London a few years ago, which was accordingly transported to the apartments of Berthier, Prince of Neuchâtel. Napoleon first examined Mr. Kempfeler's useful invention, and, in the course of conversation, he mentioned a mechanical hand, once invented by a French artist, of the name of Laurent, to whom the Abbe Delille had, at the time, addressed a poetical laudatory epistle.—Knowing, as he did, a little of every thing (and, some persons will allow, a good deal on many subjects), the Emperor talked about mechanics, mechanism, and machines, in a manner which astonished the artist. In analysing the hand, however, he used the terms, tarsal, and metatarsal, with sufficient emphasis to excite the attention of the by-standers, and, as ill luck would have it, to raise a smile on the countenances of two young surgeons who were standing, as they thought unobserved, in the recess of a window. Napoleon, however, having remarked their contemptuous titter, fixed his look on one of them, less with the view of asking information than of commanding sober attention. The young man, mistaking this look, and following the impulse of the moment, said aloud, "This explanation would be satisfactory, if your Majesty did not mistake the foot for the hand." In fact, Napoleon had meant to speak of the carpal and metacarpal bones. He immediately felt his error, coloured up, and, making a gesticulation of impatience which interrupted the conversation, he walked up to the Automaton, and said, "Allons, camarade, a nous deux!" The chessmen were placed; the Automaton inclined its head, and made a sign to Napoleon to make the first move. After proceeding in the game, Napoleon purposely made a wrong move; the Automaton bowed, and, taking up the piece, replaced it in its former position. Napoleon cheated a second time; the Automaton took the piece off the board, as forfeited. "C'est juste," said Napoleon, and cheated a third time. The Automaton shook its head,

and placing its hand on the board, broke up the game, by tumbling all the chess-men together. A burst of laughter followed from the bystanders. When this had subsided, Napoleon said, "There are certain Automata very knowing about tarsal and metatarsal, and who kick other people without giving them warning. The skill of this Automaton lies in the carpal and metacarpal; but he is polite, and only displays his ability after giving due notice,

THE GUANA

Is a species of lizard, found in the woods of the West Indies, commonly about three feet long, and proportionably bulky; it lives chiefly among fruit-trees, and is perfectly gentle and innoxious. Europeans learned to make food of them from the example of the Indians, amongst whom the practice of hunting them was a favourite diversion; but they are now become scarce, except in the islands of the Windward passage, and other places between the tropics, which are seldom visited by man: their flesh is as white and delicate as that of a chicken, and equal in flavour and wholesomeness to that of the finest green turtle. The method of catching this animal is thus curiously described by P. Labat, Tom 3, p. 315:—"We set forth, attended by a negro, who carried a long rod, at one end of which was a piece of whipcord with a running knot. After beating the bushes for some time, he discovered our game, basking in the sun, on the dry limb of a tree; whereupon he began whistling with all his might, to which the guana was wonderfully attentive, stretching out its neck and turning its head, as if to enjoy it more fully. The negro now approached, still whistling, and, advancing his rod gently, began tickling with the end of it the sides and throat of the guana, which seemed mightily pleased with the operation, for it turned on its back, stretched itself out, like a cat before the fire, and at length fairly fell asleep; which the negro perceiving, dexterously slipped the mouse over its head, and with a jerk

brought it to the ground: and good sport it afforded, to see the creature swell like a turkey-cock, at finding itself entrapped. We caught others in the same way, and kept one of them alive seven or eight days, but it grieved me to the heart that it thereby lost much delicious fat." These animals are likewise known in the East Indies. Sir Joseph Banks shot one at Batavia, and found it good food.

THE FLOATING WONDER.

THE bridge over the river Usk, near Caerlon, in Wales, is formed of wood, and very curiously constructed, the tide rising occasionally to the almost incredible height of fifty or sixty feet. The boards which compose the flooring of this bridge being designedly left loose, in order to float with the tide when it exceeds a certain height, are prevented from escaping only by little pegs at the end of them; which mode of fastening does not afford a very safe footing for the traveller, and some awkward accidents have been known to arise from this cause. The following singular adventure occurred about twenty years since to a female of the neighbourhood, as she was passing it at night. The heroine in question was a Mrs. Williams, who had been spending a cheerful evening at a neighbour's house on the eastern side of the river, and was returning home at a decent hour. The night being extremely dark, she provided herself with a lanthorn and candle, by the assistance of which she found her way to the bridge, and had already passed part of the dangerous structure, when she unfortunately trod on a plank that had by some accident slipped from its proper situation; the faithless board yielded to the weight of the good lady, who was rather corpulent, and carried her through the flooring with her candle and lanthorn into the river. Fortunately, at the moment of falling, she was standing in such a position as gave her a seat on the plank similar to that of a horseman on his nag. It may be easily imagined, that Mrs. Williams must have been dreadfully alarmed at this change.

of situation, as well as the difference of element. Blessed, however, with great presence of mind, and a patient endurance of evil, the good lady was not overwhelmed by her fall, but steadily maintained her seat on the board; taking care at the same time to preserve her candle lighted, rightly supposing it would serve as a guide to any one who might be willing to assist her. Thus bestriding the plank, our heroine was hurried down the river towards Newport, the bridge of which, she trusted, would stop her progress, or that she might alarm the inhabitants with her cries. In both her hopes, however, she was disappointed: the rapidity of a spring tide sent her through the arch with the velocity of an arrow discharged from a bow, and the good people of the town had long been wrapped in slumber. Thus situated, her prospect became each moment more desperate; her candle was nearly-extinguished; and every limb so benumbed with cold, that she had the greatest difficulty in keeping her saddle. Already she had reached the mouth of the Usk, and was on the point of encountering the turbulent waves of the Bristol Channel, when the master of a fishing boat, who was returning from his nightly toils, discovered the gleaming of her taper, and hearing her calls for assistance, though he at first thought her a witch, yet ventured to approach this floating wonder, and happily succeeded in rescuing Mrs. Williams from a watery grave, and bringing her in safety to the shore in his boat.

Interesting Varieties.

FATALITY.

The year 88 was, for several centuries, fatal to the House of Stuart:—James III., on June the 11th, 1488, lost a battle to his subjects, by whom he was pursued and assassinated. Mary, Queen of Scots, was beheaded the 8th of February, 1588. James II., of England abdicated the throne of Great Britain on the 12th of December, 1688; and in the year 1788, James Stuart, the illegitimate son of the family, expired.

*Cardinal York the person here
mentioned lived until the
1700*

HEIGHTS OF HILLS.

Altitudes of the stations and other remarkable hills in the south-west of England, that are above 1000 feet high, as computed from observations made in the course of the trigonometrical survey, conducted under the direction of the Board of Ordnance:—

Above the level of the Sea.	Feet.
Brown Willy, Cornwall . . .	1368
Butterton Hill, Devon . . .	1203
Breadumy Beacon, Gloucester . . .	1086
Cader Brown, Cornwall . . .	1011
Carraton Hill, ditto . . .	1208
Crawsand Beacon, Devon . . .	1792
Cleave Down, Gloucester . . .	1184
Dundry Beacon, Somerset . . .	1668
Hensbarrow Beacon, Cornwall . . .	1034
Jukpin Beacon, Hants . . .	1011
Kit Hill, Cornwall . . .	1067
Malvern Hill, Worcester . . .	1444
Rippon Top (Dartmoor) Devon . . .	1649

FALSE HAIR AND BAG-WIGS.

The Greeks and Romans used false hair, and had likewise a kind of hair-powder. Hannibal wore false hair. Lampridius gives a description of the Emperor Commodus's wig, which was powdered with gold dust, and anointed with ointments of an agreeable odour, that the dust might adhere to it. In 1518, John Duke of Tuscany ordered his head bailiff, at Cobourg, to procure for him from Nuremberg a handsome false head of hair.—“But secretly,” wrote he, “that it may not be known that it is for us; and let it be curled, and so contrived, that it may be put on the head without being observed.” The first who wore a peruke was an abbe named La Riviere, so loaded with hair, and so long, that it hung down to the waist. A person of a lean visage was quite hid in this cloud of hair. The fore part of the wig was then worn very high. In France this was called devant a la Fontagne, from the Marquis of that name, who first appeared in them. A certain Ervais found out the art of frizzing hair, by which means a wig appeared to have more hair in it. Bag-wigs came into fashion during the regency of the Duke of Orleans, and thence obtained the names of Peruques a la Regence. The Empe-

ror Charles VI. would allow no one to be admitted into his presence without a wig of two tails. Of a more modern date than wigs is hair powder. In the reign of Louis XIV. it was not in general use, and that king, at first, disliked the fashion of wearing it.

ENGLISH PORT.

In the work from which we copied the receipt, for making porter, printed in our 19th number, page 148, we find the subjoined account of the materials employed to manufacture an imitation of Port wine:—Twenty-four gallons of cider, six gallons of elder-berry juice, four gallons of Port wine, one gallon and a half of brandy, one pound of logwood, and twelve ounces of isinglass, dissolved in a gallon of the cider. Bung it down, and in two months it will be fit to bottle, but should not be drunk till the next year. To impart a rough flavour, from four to six ounces of alum may be added.

ANCIENT DANDIES.

MR. EDITOR,—From the scarce Poems of Edward Howard, Earl of Suffolk, published in 1725 and 1728, accept the Description of a WHIFFLER, who seems to have shone as the Prototype of a modern Dandy.

Yours, &c. S. K.

UPON A WHIFFLER.

In London town you easily may find
A set of prodigies in any kind:
In Smithfield you a hugeous ox may see,
That for the great Mogul a gift might be;
As there, likewise, a stern and hairy man,
From Negropontis brought, or from
Japan:
Yet with the WHIFFLER none must
still compare
For look, for gait, or a prepost'rous air:
He smiles so like a cat-o-mountain's grin,
You'd swear he were to Lybian apes
akin:
The sport of Nature and the strumpet's
tool,
Who never acts by any kind of rule.
If you frequent the shining theatre,
Where heav'nly virgins in their robes
appear,
Vast droves of Whifflers thither do re-
pair,
The most on foot, tho' some in hackney-
chair,

Dispensing ogles to the blushing fair.
And oft the grandeur of their mind to
show,
To painted Miss they'll in the side-box
go,
Saluting meanly, with a fond grimace,
The borrow'd lustre of her wainscot face.
'Twere to be wish'd, the constable would
seize,
And into Newgate put such fops as these,
For to the state they more vexations are;
Than all the pirate Sallee men-of-war.

A CURE FOR LOVE.

ONE end of a halter tie fast to a beam,
And make a slip knot at the other extreme;
Then just underneath let a table be set,
On which let the lover most manfully
get;
Then over his head let the halter be put,
And under his left ear be settled the
knot;
The table kick'd down, let him take a
fair swing,
And leave all the rest to the work of the
string.

TWO BLANKS TO A PRIZE.

IN the lott'ry of life, lest Dame Fortune
beguile,
This truth you'll observe if you're wise,
That, however the goddess may simper
and smile,
She has always—two blanks to a prize.

If a husband you take, miss,—or you,
sir, a wife,
From this maxim pray turn not your
eyes,
For in marriage's lott'ry, I'll venture my
life,
There are more than—two blanks to a
prize.

If in law you're entangled, why then,
silly man,
As a friend, give me leave to advise,
Slip your neck from the collar as fast as
you can,
There are fifty—two blanks to a prize!

And if for preferment you're striving at
Court,
Or by merit expect you shall rise,
Then your chance is not worth, sir,
three-fourths of a groat,
There are ninety—two blanks to a prize.

THE INCURABLE.

O DOCTOR, doctor, I am come
As far as 'tis from here to home,
To tell you my condition:

I've got the itch, I've got the gout,
My shins are bruised, I've sprained my
foot;
I want a good physician.

The surgeons say, my liver's bad,
My pulse is quick, my heart is sad,
My stomach's out of order;
I've got a hobbling in my gait,
My words I cannot speak them strait,—
Oh, tell me my disorder!

My hands are weak, my sight is dim,
And now and then my head will swim,
My neighbours won't insure me;
But the worst plague of all my life,
I've lately caught—a scolding wife:
Oh! doctor, can you cure me?

SOLUTIONS TO ARTICLES, IN NO. IV OF THE SPHINX, P. 231.

QUERY.

He must first carry over the Goat, as he may safely leave together the Wolf and the Cabbage. Having done this, he must return for the Cabbage, take it across the river, and bring the Goat back. In the next place he must take over the Wolf, and leave it with the Cabbage; and lastly, he must cross once more to fetch over the Goat.

RIDDLE.

WHAT IS MAN?

To-day he's dress'd in gold and silver
bright,
Wrapp'd in a shroud before to-morrow
night;
To-day he's feasting on delicious food,
To-morrow nought he eats can do him
good.
To-day he's nice, and scorns to feed on
crums,
In a few days himself a dish for worms:
To-day he's honour'd and in great esteem,
To-morrow not a beggar values him!
To-day his house, tho' large, he thinks
too small,
To-morrow can command no house at all.
To-day has twenty servants at his gate,
To-morrow scarcely one will deign to
wait.
To-day perfum'd, and sweet as any rose,
To-morrow stinks in every mortal's nose.
To-day he's grand, majestic, all delight,
Ghastly and pale before to-morrow
night.
Now when you've wrote and said what-
e'er you can,
This is the best that you can say of man!

CONUNDRUMS.

1. Because he makes both ends meet.
2. In February, because it is the shortest.
3. There is a difference.
4. Because one is notable, and the other not-able.
5. Because he's in-firm.
6. Because 'tis a queer-eye.

••• Solutions either to the Query or Riddle, or both, were sent by Comus, Alatus, J. T., Woodbury, K. H., Pooh! Pooh! G. W. T., Sarah, H. B., T. F., Red Lion Hill, H. B., D., E. T., J. B., and Humphrey Short.

The Miss's Numbion.

EPIGRAM, addressed to a Miss Cross, who appeared offended because the author styled her the most agreeable disagreeable person he had ever met with:—

How comes it, dear madam, you're so at
a loss

To account for your being both pleasant
and cross?

Since envy itself gives you credit for this,
Though your name is Miss Cross, you
are not a cross miss.

WHOLESALE DEALER.—A gentleman, seeing written over a shop door, "Smith, Hatter and Hosier," observed to a friend, that this was a strange combination of trades. "By no means," replied the other, "for it enables a man to clothe his customers from head to foot!"

THE DOCTOR.

A doctor well versed in the medical art,
'Mongst others for Paris resolv'd to de-
part,

And leave his "pill-garlick" concerns.
But what will become of his patients the
while?

"Never fear, sir," a neighbour rejoined
with a smile,

"They will live—till the doctor returns."

GRIFFITHS, the orator, who was bandy-legged, once won a wager by that circumstance. A gentleman in company took the liberty of ridiculing his person; and pointing to his left leg, offered a bet that there

was not another limb so ill-formed in the room. Griffiths pleasantly accepted the proffered wager, and then exhibiting his right leg, exclaimed, "By God, here's the fellow to it!"

DANCING.—A gentleman went to Paris to spend his money, and to be initiated in all the secrets of the reigning fashions. Amongst other teachers, he engaged a dancing-master, who never could prevail upon his pupil to turn out his toes. "I'll tell you what," said the latter, when pressed on this point, "I'll pay you double for every lesson, but then you must teach me to dance with my toes turned in!"

TRUTH.—A Gascon once boasted that he had travelled all over the known world. "Upon my word, gentlemen," concluded he, "I have even been at the very end of the world; one step farther, and I should have trod upon nothing."

A SLIGHT ADDITION.—A fellow who was tried at Dublin, for some offence, received the following sentence:—

JUDGE. "The sentence of the Court is, that you be flogged from the Bank to the Quay."—**PRISONER.** "Thank you, my lord! you have done your worst."—**JUDGE.** "And back again."

SMART RETORT.—A Quaker riding in a stage-coach with an officer, observed, that his sword was very troublesome. All my enemies are of the same opinion," replied the officer.

A SCOTTISH EARL, of weak intellects, remarked one day to a friend, that his mother had left a large fortune to her children. "Is it possible?" said the other; "I never heard that she had a fortune to leave."—"Yes, sir," replied his lordship, gravely; "she left them a very large **INTELLECTUAL** fortune."—"True, my lord; I now perfectly understand you; she acted as every prudent mother ought, and left her whole fortune to her younger children."

HAMLET.—A musician celebrated for his devotion to the rosy god, having sacrificed too freely, found himself at a loss, in the orchestra of one of the theatres, on tuning his instrument, to produce harmony. The leader of the band, rather displeased, demanded what was the matter with his violin. The votary of Bacchus, after a short pause, answered, "Why, my fiddle is acting **HAMLET**; it says, 'Though you may fret me, you shall not play upon me.'"

APPROPRIATE OATH.—The deputies of the reformed religion, after the massacre which took place at Paris on St. Bartholomew's Day, treated with the king, the queen-mother, and some others of the council, for a peace. Both sides were agreed upon the articles, but a question arose as to what security should be given for their performance. After several plans had been proposed and rejected, the queen-mother indignantly exclaimed, "Why is not the word of a king sufficient security?"—"No, by St. Bartholomew, madam!" replied one of the deputies.

MR. SMITH.—A gentleman going into the pit at C. G. Theatre, and finding all the seats occupied, gave a box, 6d. to call out loudly, "Is there any gentleman here named Smith? because he must go home immediately." About 15 or 20 people quickly hustled out, and the gentleman, by this ingenious contrivance, procured an excellent place.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—COMBS, A. F., H. B., G. Simkins, and W. T. Evans.

Tyvo's lines shortly.—We cannot undertake to explain why we reject articles; such a detail would occupy a third part of every Number. A second edition of No. 7 is ready for delivery. Our Numbers will form an annual Vol., with Title, Preface, and Index.

ERRATUM.—Page 231, column 2, line 44, for "agrel," read "agret."

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 32.

SATURDAY, JULY 5, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; show us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE.

SECTION 8.—Having described the theatres existing in the time of Shakspeare with as much accuracy as the scanty notices to be met with respecting them will enable us, a brief view of their internal customs and economy will we doubt not be looked upon as a desirable accompaniment.

The stage was strewed with rushes, and on particular occasions was matted over, of which custom the present practice of covering the front with green cloth on the performance of a tragedy, appears to be a relic.—It is doubtful whether there was a curtain in the front, as in the modern theatres; or one at the back only, as shewn in the view of the Red Bull in our 30th number, opening in the middle, and drawn backwards and forwards on a rod. In some theatres they were of woollen, in others of silk. There was also an upper stage, or balcony, which was made use of when any part of the dialogue was supposed to be spoken over the common stage, such as by Juliet, in the balcony scene, &c.—At each side of this, there were what were termed private boxes, as shewn in the above-mentioned plate, which being inconveniently situated, were at a lower

price than those in front.—It has been much disputed whether the stage was furnished with moveable scenery in the time of Shakspeare, and it still remains a doubtful point. Probably something of the kind was in use at the private houses;* but where, it was totally unknown, the deficiency was supplied by writing on a board the names of the different places in which the scene was laid during the progress of the piece, which board was displayed in such a manner as to be visible to the audience.—When a tragedy was to be performed, the stage was hung with black. It was lighted by two large branches, similar to those now hung in churches; and from some verses prefixed to Fletcher's "Faithful Shepherdess," we learn that the lights were of wax. Mr. Mudge seems to be of opinion that the stage received no light except from these branches, but it will be seen by the view of the interior of the Red Bull theatre that there were also some rude lamps placed in the front. The inconvenient method of lighting by branches was continued till 1765, when

* Vide Section 6.

Garrick introduced the present foot-lamps. The body of the house was illuminated by pitched ropes, placed in large open lanthorns.—Many of the companies at this period were so scanty in their numbers, that the same person often played two or three parts, as is still frequently the case in our provincial troops. Puttenham tells us, that on these occasions they wore vizards to conceal their features. The issue of a battle on which the fate of an empire was supposed to depend, was thus frequently obliged to be determined by half-a-dozen combatants. Before the play began, three flourishes of music were played, a practice which was only discontinued towards the end of the last century; music was likewise played between the acts as at present. The musicians sat in a balcony at the side of the stage, corresponding with what is now called the upper stage-box, as there was no division between the pit and the stage but a railing, and not always that. Soon after the Restoration, the band took the station which they have ever since occupied.—The person who spoke the Prologue entered immediately after the third music, arrayed in a black cloak; black being then, and we believe at present, looked upon as the indispensable costume of those who deliver Prologues. The complete dress of an ancient Prologue-speaker is still retained in the piece exhibited before the King in "Hamlet." Epilogues were not then regular appendages to plays.—The wardrobes of the theatres were not very costly or splendid. Mr. Malone has preserved an inventory of the dresses, &c. belonging to the company performing at the Rose, which though they might appear very gay to our ancestors, would but ill accord with the magnificence of our modern theatres.—Three sides of the house were occupied by galleries or scaffolds, constructed over each other; below these were smaller apartments called rooms, intended for the genteeler part of the audience, and nearly answering to our modern boxes.

Between the acts, and sometimes between the scenes, and even in the

play itself, it was customary to introduce a Clown, to excite mirth by his gestures and extemporal wit. He generally threw his ideas into hobbling doggerel verse, and often entered into a contest of raillery and sarcasm with some of the audience. His peculiar province was, however, to entertain the spectators at the conclusion of the play, with some ludicrous metrical composition, accompanied with a pipe and tabor, which appears to have supplied the place of the modern farce.—To please the vulgar, mock engagements were introduced into almost every representation, though not incidental to the piece, during which small pieces of ordnance were fired off behind the scenes. The custom was often observed after a more vulgar manner, by affixing crackers to the Clown's breeches; but the system fell into disuse in the early part of the 17th century, as the audiences became more refined.

Amongst the characters in our old plays a Fool frequently occurs. The terms Clown and Fool were (however improperly) used as synonymous by our early writers; but although the Fool of our old plays denoted either a mere natural, or else a witty hireling or artificial fool, retained for the purpose of making sport for his employers, the Clown was certainly a perfectly distinct character, and one of much greater variety. A Fool generally formed part of the establishment of every nobleman in the 16th century, and indeed much later. The stage-costume of the Fool is not exactly known, but it most probably closely resembled that used in common life: viz. a long cloak or petticoat, originally worn by the idiot or natural fool, and obviously intended for purposes of cleanliness and concealment. Why it was adopted by the artificial fool is not so apparent. It was of various colours, and the materials were often costly, as of velvet, and fringed with yellow.—The figure on the left in our cut represents one of these Fools, probably in his stage-dress; it is copied from the frontispiece to the "Fair Maid of the Exchange," a Comedy by Thomas Heywood.—The costume of the Clown

it is perhaps impossible at this period satisfactorily to ascertain; but the figure on the right, which we have taken the liberty of copying from a plate in Mr. Douce's "Illustrations of Shakspeare," doubtless pretty closely resembles one of these sons of mirth. It was taken, Mr. Douce informs us, from an old German Print, by an unknown master. The Fools, and probably the Clowns also, carried a kind of staff, as shewn in the print, on the top of which was carved a human head, and frequently subjects of the most obscene description. To the other end of this bauble was sometimes affixed an inflated bladder, with which they belaboured those who were objects of their mirth or anger, and were sometimes in like manner belaboured in return. To enter into a full examination of the different characters and functions of the Fool and Clown would oblige us far to exceed the limits we are able to allot to this article, and we must therefore refer such of our readers as may feel interested in the subject, to Vol II. of Mr. Douce's "Illustrations of Shakspeare," where they will find a Dissertation, in which it is discussed in a very learned and amusing manner.— (Resumed at page 259.)

SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

KING JAMES THE FIRST'S PROCLAMATION FOR ENCOURAGING SPORTS.

(Concluded from page 237.)

"OUR expresse pleasure therefore is, that the Lawes of our Kingdome, and Canons of our Church, be as wel obserued in that Countie, as in all other places of this our Kingdome. And, on the other part, that no lawfull Recreation shall bee barred to our good people, which shall not tend to the breach of our aforesayd Lawes, and Canons of our Church: which to expresse more particularly, our pleasure is, that the Bishop, and all other inferior Churchmen, and Churchwardens, shall for their parts bee careful and diligent, both to instruct the ignorant, and conuince and reforme them that are misled in Religion; presenting them that will not conforme

themselves, but obstinately stand out, to our Judges and Justices; whom we likewise command to put the Law in due execution against them.

"Our pleasure likewise is, that the Bishop of that Diocese take the like straight order with all the Puritanes and Precisians within the same; either constraining them to conforme themselves, or to leave the County, according to the Lawes of our Kingdome, and Canons of our Church; and so, to strike equally on both hands, against the contentners of our authority, and adversaries of our Church. And, as for our good people's lawfull Recreation, our pleasure likewise is, that after the end of Diuine Service, our good people be not disturbed, letted, or discouraged, from any lawfull recreation; such as DAUNCING, either men or women, ARCHERY for men, LEAPING, VAULTING, or any other such harmlesse Recreation; nor from hauing of MAY-GAMES, WHITSON ALES, and MORRIS-DANCES, and the setting vp of MAY-POLES, and other sports therewith used; so as the same be had in due and conuenient time, without impediment or neglect of Diuine Service; and, that women shall have leaue to carry rushes to the Church, for the decorating of it, according to their old custome. But, withall, we doe here account still as prohibited, all unlawfull games to bee used vpon Sundayes, as BEARE and BULL-BAITINGS, INTERLUDES, and (at all times, in the meaner sort of people, by law prohibited) BOWLING.

"And, likewise, we barre from this benefite and liberty, all suche knowne recusants, either men or women, as will abstaine from coming to Church or Diuine Service; being, therefore, vnworthy of any lawfull recreation after the said Service, that will not first come to the Church, and serue God. Prohibiting, in like sort, the said Recreations to any that, though they conforme in religion, are not present in the Church, at the Service of God, before their going to the said Recreations. Our pleasure likewise is, that they to whom it belongeth in office, shall present, and sharply punish, all such as, in abuse of this our

Liberty, will use these exercises before the ends of all Divine Services for that day. And we likewise straightly command, that every person shall resort to his owne Parish Church, to heare Divine Service; and each Parish by itselfe to use the said Recreation after Divine Service. Prohibiting, likewise, any offensive weapons to bee carried or used, in the said times of Recreations. And, our pleasure is, that this our Declaration shall bee published, by order from the Bishop of the Diocesse, through all the Parish Churches; and, that both our Judges of our Circuit, and our Justices of our Peace, be informed thereof.

"Given at our Mannour of Greenwich, the foure and twentieth day of May, in the sixteenth yeere of our Raigne of England, France, and Ireland, and of Scotland the one and fiftieth."

"Now, out of a like pious care for the service of God, and for suppressing of any humors that oppose trueth, and for the ease, comfort, and recreation of our well-deserving people, we doe ratifie and publish this, our blessed Father's Declaration. The rather, because of late, in some Counties of our Kingdome, wee finde that, under pretence of taking away abuses, there hath been a generall forbidding, not onely of ordinary meetings, but of the Feasts of the Dedication of the Churches, commonly called WAKES. Now, our expresse will and pleasure is, that these Feasts, with others, shall be observed; and, that our Justices of the Peace, in their severall Divisions, shall looke to it: both, that all disorders there may be prevented or punished, and that all the neighbourhood and freedome, with manlike and lawfull exercises, bee used. And, wee farther command our Justices of Assize, in their severall Circuits, to see that no man doe trouble or molest any of our loyall and duetifull people, in or for their lawfull Recreations: having first done their duties to God, and continuing inobedience to vs and our lawes. And, of this wee command all our Judges, Justices of the Peace (as well within

Liberties, as without), Maiors, Bayliffes, Constables, and other Officers, to take notice, and see observed, as they tender our displeasure. And, wee farther will, that publication of this our command bee made, by order from the Bishops, through all the Parish Churches of their severall Diocesses, respectively.

"Given at our Palace of Westminster, the eighteenth day of October in the ninth yeere of our Reigne."

GOD SAVE THE KING!

THE TWO FRIARS.

THE following pleasant story is the source whence Colman derived the incidents of one of his best "Broad Grins." Tales bearing a close resemblance to it occur in many old French and English books, but its origin was probably Oriental, though the names have been changed. We retain the ancient orthography of the work from which it is transcribed:—

Sir Thos. Erpingham, Lord Warden of the Cinque-Ports, in the reign of Henry the Vth, had a lady of such beauty that she attracted the eyes of all beholders. This lady, with her husband, residing in the citie of Norwich, he, for the good of his soul, erected a church at his own charge, and a religious house, that entertained 12 Friars and an Abbot. In this convent there were two, Frier John and Richard, who were at continuall enmity, and by no mediation could be truly reconciled. It was the custom of the knight and his lady daily to rise to mattins, and she being affable to all, it bred a strange boldness in Frier John; for she never came thro' the cloysters but he was still, with duckes and cringes, attending her, and she (suspecting nothing) with modest smiles, returned thanks to him again, which bred in him that impudence, that he presumed to write a letter to her, in which he laid open a deal of love; this letter came to her hand, at which being astonished at such lewdness in one that professed chastitie, and not knowing whether it might not be a trick plotted by her husband to

make trial of her chastitie, she thought it her best course to show him the letter, of which he no sooner took a view, but he began to repent him of his charitie, in regard of their ingratitude; but yet, concealing his rage, causes an answer to be drawn, to which he commanded her to sett her hand; the contents to this effect; that she was greatly compassionate of his love, and that such a night her husband being to ride towards London, he should be admitted, lodged, and entertained according to his desires; this letter was received by the frier with joy unspeakable. Against the night he provides clean linnen, perfumed night-cap, and other necessaries; he keeps his time, is admitted by herself without witness, and so conveyed into a close chamber; which he was no sooner entered, but in comes the knight with his man in great furie, and without giving him the least time, either to call for helpe to the house or to heaven, strangled the poor frier, and left him dead upon the ground. The deed was no sooner done, and his rage somewhat appeased, but he began to enter into consideration of the heinousness of the murder, with the penalty of the law, which would be no less than forfeiture of life and estate; and now begins to ponder how to prevent the last, which may give leisure to repent the first. After diverse projects, it came into his mind to have the bodie conveyed back into the monastery, which being divided from his house only by a brick wall, might be done without any great difficulty; this was no sooner motioned, but his man remembers him of a ladder in the back yard, fit for the purpose; briefly, they both lay hands to the body, and the man with the frier on his back mounts the ladder, and sits with him astride upon the wall, then drawing up the ladder on the contrary side, descends with him into the monastery garden, where spying the house of office, he set him upon the same as upright as he could, there leaves him, and conveys himself again over the wall, but for haste forgetting the ladder, and so delivers to his master how

and where he had bestowed the frier, at which being better comforted, they betook themselves to their rest. It happened the same night, that Frier Richard, being much troubled with looseness in his body, had occasion to rise, and being somewhat hastily taken, makes what speed he can to the house of office; but, by the light of the moon, discerning somebody before him, whilst he was able, he contained himself; but finding there was no remedy, he called and entreated the person to come away; but hearing no answer, he imagined it to be done on purpose, the rather, because approaching somewhat nearer, he plainly perceived it was frier John, his old adversary, who, the louder he called, seemed the less to listen; therefore, thinking this counterfeit deafness to be done on purpose and spite, to make him ashamed of himself, he snatcht up a brick-batt to be revenged, and hitting his adversarie full upon the breast, down tumbles Frier John, without life or motion; which he seeing, thought at first to raise him up, but after many proofs, finding him to be stone dead, verily believes that he had slain him! What shall he do now? The gates are fast locked, and fly he cannot; but, as sudden extremities impress in man as sudden shifts, so he, espying the ladder, presently remembers what had been whispered of Frier John's love to the knight's ladie; and lifting him upon his shoulders, by the help of the same ladder, carries him into the porch of the knight's hall, and there sets him; and so, closely conveys himself back into the monastery, not suspected of any. In the interim, the knight being troubled in conscience, could by no means sleep, but calls up his man, and bids him go listen if he can hear any uproar about the murther. Forth goes he, and having passed the length of the hall, finds frier John sitting upright in the porch; he starting at the sight, runs back affrighted, and brings this news to his master, who, no less astonished, could not believe it to be so, till himself went down and became eye-witness to the strange object; then despairing, he thinks with-

in himself that murthier is one of the crying sins that cannot be concealed; yet, collecting his spirits, he proposes to make tryall of a desperate adventure, and put the discovery thereof to accident. He remembers an old stallion that he had used in the French wars, and withall a rusty armor, hanging in his armorie; he commands both instantly to be brought, with strong newe cords, a case of rustie pistols, and launce; the horse is saddled and caparisoned, the armor put upon the frier, and he fast bound in the seat; the launce tyed to his wrist, and the lower end put into the rest; his head-piece claspt on, and his beaver up; and thus accoutred like a knight, they turn him out of the gates, to try a new adventure. Whilst these things were thus a fitting, Frier Richard in the monastery, no less perplexed than the knight, and dreading the strictness of the law, summons all his witts about him to prevent the worst; he at length concludes that it is his safest way to fly; he remembers withall, that there was belonging to the fryery a mare employed to carry corn to and from the mill; he therefore calls up the baker, and tells him that he understands that provisions were that morning to be fetched from the mill at an early hour; therefore, if he would let him know where the mare was stalled, he would (it being now night) save him the trouble, and be back before morning. The fellow, willing to rid himself of the taske, caused the back gate to be opened; the frier gets up and rides out, just at the instant when the knight and his man had turned out the other frier on horseback, to seek his fortune; the horse presently scents the mare, and after her he gallops. Frier Richard, looking back amazed to have an armed knight pursue him, and by the moon-light perceiving the frier armed (for he might discern his face partly by the moon and partly by the breaking of the day, his beaver being up) away flies he, and takes through the streets; after him (or rather after the mare) speeds the horse; at length it was Frier Richard's ill fate to take into a turn-again lane, that had no

passage thro'; there Frier John overtakes him, the horse mounts the mare, and with his violent motion the armor makes a terrible noise; Frier Richard's burthened conscience clamours out, and withall he cries, "Guilty of the murthier!" At the noise, the people being amazed, run out of their beds into the streets; they apprehended miracles, and he confessed wonders; but withall the barbarous and inhuman fact of having murthured one of his convent; the grudge that was betwixt them is known, and the apparent justice of heaven the rather believed. Frier John is dismounted and sent to his grave; Frier Richard to prison; he is arraigned, and in process, by his own confession, condemned; but before the execution, the knight, knowing his own guilt, posts to the king, makes voluntary confession, and hath life and fortune for former good service pardoned him; Frier Richard is released, and the accident remains recorded.

Interesting Varieties,

MODERN POETRY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NIC-NAC,

SIR—As every line that proceeds from the pen of celebrated living authors, must be interesting to the readers of the *Nic-Nac*, you will perhaps not object to inserting the subjoined specimens of Modern Poetry, by three popular writers, whose initials are affixed thereto. SPORZA.

THE ANCIENT MAN.

I ONCE beheld a very ancient man,
Eating hog-puddings at his cottage door;
His galligaskins were of corduroy,
And waistcoat he had none. His tattered coat
A lonely button fastened o'er his breast.
Seam'd was his face with scars, and on his head
(Close shorn by time) he wore a woollen cap,
A small red night-cap, of a reverend age.
Grey were his little eyes, and his sharp teeth,
Though dark of hue, and straggling in array,

Were nimble in their motions. As I
pass'd,
His long hog-puddings vanish'd one by
one.
A dog was near him, on whose shaggy
hide
He wip'd his greasy fingers; and me-
thought
A wond'rous mortal was this ancient man-
I ask'd of him his history, and he
Did with a stern and alter'd countenance
Look stedfastly upon me, and reply,
"WHAT'S THAT TO YOU." W. W.

THE SQUEAKING GHOST,

A TERRIFIC TALE,
(FROM THE GERMAN.)

THE wind whistled loud, Farmer Dob-
bin's wheat-stack
Fell down, the rain beat 'gainst his door;
As he sat by the fire he heard the roof
crack,
The cat 'gan to mew, and to set up her
back,
And the candle burn'd—just as before.

The farmer exclaim'd, with a piteous sigh,
To get rid of this curs'd noise and rout;
"Wife, fetch us some ale;"—his dame
heav'd a sigh,
Hemm'd and cough'd three times three,
then made this reply,
"I can't, mun!"—"Why?"—" 'Cause
the cask's out!"

By the side of the fire sat Roger Gee-ho,
Who had finish'd his daily vocation;
With Lucy, whose eyes were as black as
a sloe,
A damsel indeed who had never said
"No,"
Because—she ne'er had an occasion.

All these were alarm'd by most horrible
cries,
And were thrown in a terrible state;
Till, op'ning the window, with wide
staring eyes,
They found to their joy no less than sur-
prise,
'Twas the old sow stuck fast in a gate.
R. S.

ARTHUR,

A SUBLIME DESCRIPTIVE SONNET.

DARK was the night, and loud the wind-
storm howl'd,
Around, above, the vivid lightnings glare;
The thunder's awful noise incessant roll'd,
In dreadful peals, along the troubled air;

When Arthur, silent, bent his careful way
Across the turret's dull and dang'rous
gloom,
Seiz'd on the massy door, that straight
gave way,
And enter'd slow the horror-breathing
room.
Trembling with dumb amazement, soft
he trod,
While hope and fear his breast alter-
nate sway'd,
And reach'd a deep recess, where sternly
stood,
A table, dimly gleaming in the shade:
He felt,—then utter'd with terrific fear,
"Confound the tinder-box, it is not here!"

THE AMERICAN MUSE.—No. 2.

A HEBREW MELODY.

The wave has still as deep a die,
That breaks on Judah's shore;
Serene and cloudless is her sky
As 'twas in days of yore;
And there the sun as brightly shines;
But ah! on Judah's holy shrines
His beam alights no more.

On Judah's mountains and her plain,
The stately olives stand;
And still her tow'ring palms remain
In desolation grand;
As monarchs of the waste they rise,
But ev'ry blast awakes their sighs
For Judah's hapless land.

On Sharon still, to woo the gale,
The mountain roses bloom;
And in each wild and woody vale
The lily cheers the gloom:
But these in mournful splendour tower,
And flourish like some lonely flower
That blossoms o'er a tomb.
("Rahway Museum.")

ADDRESS TO NEW YORK, DURING THE LATE PESTILENCE.

BY W. B. TAPPAN.

O sister City! now in tears
Of bitterness, thou weep'st sore;
On thee the angry cloud appears,
And heavily the tempests lour:
Within thy gates the voice of woe
Is heard—there lingers fell despair:
The beauty of thy house is low,
The pale Destroyer walketh there.

The aged father's heart is riven,
His prop is hurried to the grave,

The babe, sweet chernub lately given,
Hath fled; Heaven claims the boon it
gave.

In Rama, lamentation's sigh,
The midnight burst of grief was known;
In thee, how oft the mother's cry
Had told her bosom's treasure flown!

While in thy street the trophied king
Rides forth upon his phantom steed,
And bids his lance new conquests bring,
And bids again fresh victims bleed.
Be ours the sympathizing part
To pluck away the rankling spear;
Be ours upon the broken heart
To pour compassion's holy tear.

O THOU! who, on the storm careering,
Deaf'st the red thunder to thy foes;
O THOU! who, in the calm appearing,
Speak'st to the trembler sweet repose:
We ask Thy help, for help is Thine;
Bid the Death Angel now forbear:
Though 'neath thy footstool terrors
shine,
The mercy seat, O God! is there.
(*"Franklin Gazette."*)

The White Nunchion.

COMPLIMENT.—A miserable scribbler once recited a poem of his own composing, to the celebrated Persian Poet Giami. "Observe," said he, "the singular merit of this composition; I have omitted the letter *ELIF* throughout." "I perceive it," answered Giami, "and I only wish you had omitted all the others."

MEDICAL FRIENDSHIP.—A facetious physician once observed, that he never said in company, "I drink to your health," but, "My service to you."

A POSER.—A Frenchman meeting an English soldier with a Waterloo Medal, began sneeringly to animadvert on our Government for bestowing such a trifle, which did not cost them three francs. "That is true, to be sure," replied the soldier; "it did not cost the English Government three francs, but it cost the French a Napoleon."

The clerk of a chapel of ease at Meltham in Yorkshire, being ordered to advertise a horse, described it as follows:—"Stolen, or otherwise conveyed from Hallam, near Bedlam, a horse 15 hands high, with four white feet, and a black one, God save the King, with a pack-saddle on his back."

UNINTENTIONAL TRUTH.—A notorious liar boasted of never having told a truth. "Then you have told one now, for the first time," observed a person who heard him, "and thus destroyed the only glory you had left."

NATURAL INFERENCE.—A gentleman at a dinner party drank very little wine. His host pressed him to take some more; remarking, that if every body were to drink as he did, wine would become very cheap. "Allow me to differ from you there, sir," said the gentleman; "on the contrary, I think it would get dearer, for I drink as much as I like."

ACTOR OF ALL-WORK.—A Colonel was very fond of talking of himself and his merits. Once, he said, "It is almost impossible to conceive the business that I have on hand, for I am not only the Commander of the Regiment, but also its Major, Adjutant, and God knows what all!"—"Your own trumpeter too," remarked a lady, ironically.

IRISH WIT.

A Pat, an odd joker and Yankee more sly,
Once riding together, a gallows passed by.
Said the Yankee to Pat, "If I don't make too free,
Give the gallows its due, and pray where would you be?"
"Why, honey," says Pat, "faith that's easily known,
I'd be riding to town by myself all alone."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—Curiosus, H. Swollas, and Valerius. The "*Athenæum*" came to hand.

A letter has been left at the Office for J. C. A. B.

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

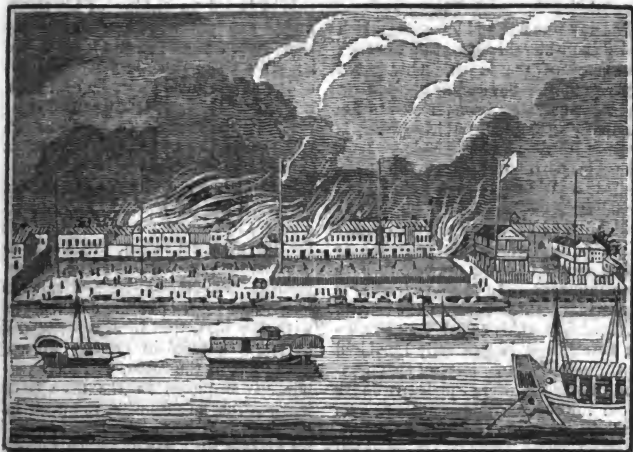
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 33.

SATURDAY, JULY 12, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us no we are tempted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it" — SHAKESPEARE.



BURNING OF CANTON.

SEVERAL prints of the conflagration of the English Factory, &c. at Canton, have recently been published, which convey about as correct an idea of the place they profess to represent, as they do of Dover or Liverpool. The above view, taken during the progress of the flames, we have been favoured with by a spectator, and its fidelity may be relied upon.

The fire originated at the house of a baker, in the suburbs of the city, about eight o'clock in the evening of the 31st of October last; and although no danger to the factories was then apprehended (the place being three miles distant from them), most of the Europeans residing at Canton repaired to the spot, and endeavoured to arrest the progress of the flames. The scarcity of water, however, and the obstinacy of the natives, who refused either to assist them, or to allow them to introduce the engines into the houses, rendered all their endeavours

ineffectual; and by midnight so many as 100 houses were consumed, the greater part of which were not more than two stories high; and as the streets were but nine feet wide, it was useless to pull down the buildings. At this period the wind blew a complete gale from the North, and it was evident, that unless it subsided, the fire would ere long reach the factories. The Commodore of the Indianmen, and the Captains of the other vessels, therefore sent for assistance to the shipping, and about 2 or 3 a. m. the occupants of the various factories began to remove their goods, and endeavour to stow them in a place of safety. The scene was now sublimely awful; the flames raged dreadfully, and all hopes of checking their ravages were abandoned. At 6 a. m. the fire reached the back of the European factories; shortly after it burst forth at the front; and by 4 p. m. on the 1st of November, they were levelled to

the ground, with the exception of two suites of apartments belonging to the English East India Company, and three appertaining to the Dutch factory. At this juncture the wind shifted to the East, and shortly after the fire was in a great measure suppressed.

The day was wet and lowering, which added considerably to the horrible grandeur of the scene. Our print represents the flames bursting out at a place called Hog Lane, close to the Company's factory, which latter is distinguished by the English flag. The American standard, tied in knots (called a Whift) is seen flying, as a signal for American boats. The long wall, with two doors, marks the house of Mowqua, a Hong merchant, whose losses on the occasion are said to have been immense. In the foreground is a war-junk. The boat in the centre, without a mast, is called **THE FLOW-ER BOAT**, and is generally inhabited by Chinese Cyrians, but on this occasion the ladies were ejected to make room for the European officers, who made it a temporary place of abode.

● NIGHT-MARE.

The degree of consciousness during a paroxysm of Night-mare, is so much greater than happens in a dream, that the person who has had a vision of this kind cannot bring himself easily to acknowledge the deceit, unless he should wake out of the paroxysm, and find some incongruity with respect to time or place, which would prove the transaction an allusion. Of the various deceptions of this kind, related by Mr. Waller, in a treatise on Incubus, we select one. As terrific dreams and nocturnal visions are all of the same complaint, they are prevented by similar means.

Mr. B— (at this moment a student in London), was once living in lodgings in the vicinity of St. Thomas's Hospital, and happening to wake in the middle of the night, as he imagined he heard the sound of footsteps approach his door, which was quickly opened, and he saw distinctly a man

enter the room, whom he described as having a blue coat with white buttons: the moon was shining into the room, and he could see every object distinctly: the man approached the side of the bed, when Mr. B. drew himself under the bed-clothes; in this situation he heard the ticking of his watch under the pillow, where he had always taken the precaution to secure it. In a short time he felt the hand of the man rummaging the pillow, as if with the design of seizing the watch; upon which Mr. B. drew the watch gently into the bed, and concealed it there: he still, however, felt distinctly the man's hand under the pillow, and was now in the greatest alarm imaginable, not only for his watch, but for his personal safety, and began to complain aloud of pain in the bowels, accusing the supper he had eaten as being the cause of the disturbance, with the idea, that by this stratagem he might succeed in getting up and going out of the room, without exciting any suspicion in the man (who was still, as he supposed, standing by the bed-side) as to the true cause of his getting up. He at length ventured to get out on the opposite side of the bed, and hastened towards the door, the man followed him, and he says he felt distinctly the impression of the hand upon one shoulder, just as he was escaping out at the door. He ran instantly into the bed-room of the man who kept the house, and gave an alarm. This person immediately arose, and called in the watchman: the house was searched from top to bottom very strictly, but no person of any description could be found; the doors and windows were all secure, nor was there a possibility of any one getting in or out of the house unobserved. Mr. B., however, could not be satisfied on this score; the evidence of his own senses, which had never before deceived him, appeared to him to be superior to all other evidence whatsoever. He quitted his lodgings the next day, and retained pertinaciously the opinion that what he had seen was real, until more than a year afterwards, when, being at sea, he was again visited by this extraor-

dinary affection, and was equally certain of the reality of his vision; but, in this case, he had the opportunity of proving, in the most satisfactory manner, that it was a delusion.

This most distressing, and, in some cases, dangerous complaint, arises in general from an acid in the stomach, and may almost always be prevented by taking twenty or thirty grains of carbonate of soda in a little ale or porter going to bed, keeping the bowels open with some gentle medicine.

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE.

SECTION 9.—Having described the rise, progress, and internal economy of the Theatres existing at the commencement of the 17th century, what may be looked upon as the first great period of our Dramatic History, is now completed. At most of the houses noticed, performances appear to have taken place during the reign of James First, and the early part of his son's, but a period quickly arrived when this sunshine of histrionic prosperity underwent a long and total eclipse. One of the first measures of the revolutionary parliament was an attack upon the Theatre, as is shewn by the following Ordinance, which was proposed by the Commons, and agreed to by the Lords, in September, 1642:—

“An ORDINANCE Of both Houses of Parliament

For the suppressing of Publike Stage-Playes throughout the Kingdom, during these Calamitous Times.

“WHEREAS the distressed estate of Ireland, steeped in her own blood, and the distracted estate of England, threatned with a cloud of blood, by a Civill Warre, call for all possible meanes to appease and avert the wrath of God, appearing in these judgments, amongst which, fasting and prayer having often been tried to be very effectual, have bin lately, and are still enjoyed; and whereas publike sports doe not well agree with publike cala-

mities, nor publike Stage-Playes with the seasons of humiliation, this being an exercise of sad and pious solemnity; and the other spectacles of pleasure, too commonly expressing lascivious mirth and levetie: it is therefore thought fit, and ordeined, by the Lords and Commons in this Parliament assembled, that while these sad causes and set times of humiliation doe continue, publike Stage-Playes shall cease and bee forborne. Instead of which, are recommeaded to the people of this land, the profitable and seasonable considerations of repentance, reconciliation, and peace with God, which probably may produce outward peace and prosperity, and bring againe times of joy and gladnesse to these nations.

“Die Veneris, Sep. the 2nd. 1642.

“Ordered by the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, that this Ordinance concerning Stage-Playes be forthwith printed and published.

“John Browne, Cler. Parliament.

“September 3. London: printed for John Wright, 1642.”

This prohibition, however, appears not to have been so effectual as was desired by the framers of it, and Plays were still occasionally performed while the ultimate success of the republican arms was doubtful; but on the 3d of Feb. 1648, when the royal cause was in a desperate state, a more severe Ordinance, commanding the immediate and total suppression of Theatres, was issued by the Parliament. It enacted that all players who presumed to follow their profession, should be looked upon as rogues and vagabonds, and punished accordingly; and, that every person present as a spectator, should, upon conviction, forfeit 5s. to the poor of the parish in which the offence was committed. It, moreover, authorized the Lord Mayor of London, and the Magistrates of Middlesex and Surrey, to pull down all stage-galleries, seats, and boxes, used for the acting of Stage-Plays, within their several jurisdictions. The document may be seen at full in “Cobbel's Parliamentary History,” v. 3. p. 846. The orders thus given were strictly carried into effect; most of the The-

atres were demolished; the Players became completely dispersed, and never more dared to perform, except by stealth, till just before the Restoration of Charles Second. In the next Section we shall resume our History at that period, and relate the proceedings which took place upon the re-establishment of the Theatre.—(Resumed at page 265.)

GHOST STORIES.—No. IV.

[THE reader is requested to observe that the following relation forms a sequel to that inserted at page 180, to which he please to refer, previous to the perusal of the present article, in order to refresh his memory as to the antecedent particulars.]

The town clerk of Barnstable in Devonshire, in the year 1639, was one of the people called Puritans. He had an apprentice of about 16 years of age, a sturdy lad, whose name was Chamberlain, he complained often to his master that the house was haunted, and that he was frightened with apparitions. Sometimes he saw a young gentlewoman of about 18 or 20 years of age, all in white, with her hair disheveled, leading a little child up and down the room, which seemed as if it were but new born; otherwhile, she would carry it in her arms, but very dejectedly and disconsolately; and she would look upon him in a very doleful manner. Afterwards there would come an old man in a gown, and set upon the bed by him, staring him in the face, but spake never a word. These apparitions being very troublesome to him, his pious master took him to several ministers, who conversed with him, and advised him to speak to it; and one of them who encouraged him to do it, watched some nights with him; but upon sight of the spectre was so affrighted himself, that he could not speak, nor would he suffer young Chamberlain to speak neither. But, one night, as he was sitting up, writing some instrument or engrossing a deed, he came to a place that was interlined and blotted, and just then comes into the room (as he thought) his master, who sits down

by him, wedging him in so that he could not get out; he reads the blurred paragraph over and over, but not being able to make any sense of it, he takes it up, and speaks (as he supposed) to his master. "Sir," saith he, "will you be pleased to read this to me, for I cannot tell what sense to make of it;" but there was no answer given him. He, supposing that his master was busy in meditation, thought it good manners not to interrupt him, till having tired himself to pick sense out of the blotted writing, which he could not do, he takes it up the second time, and bespeaks his supposed master; "Sir," saith he, "will you be pleased—" And with that casting his eye upon him, soon discovers the mistake, and finds that it was the spectre that had so long troubled him. He would then have given his life for a halfpenny; but, plucking up his spirit, necessity and despair making him valiant, he boldly asks him, "Sir, why do you trouble me?" To which the spectre replies, "Do not be afraid, I will do you no harm."—"Well, what is it then you would have?"—"Why," saith the spectre, "go thou into such a room in the house, and dig there up the planking, and you will find four boxes one upon the other; in the first, there is all sorts of wearing apparel, of silk, sattin, and velvet, for men and women. In the second, abundance of good table and bed linen, very fine, and choice of Holland and damask. In the third, there is a sum of money, in gold and silver ready coined, and two silver pots, one full of gold." Which, together with all the rest of these buried goods, the apparition bestowed upon him; but the other silver pot the spectre commands him upon pain of death not to look into, but to take it and carry it into Wales, to Mrs. Petty, his master's daughter; and told him that when he landed in such a place as he assigned him, he would meet him, and deliver him a further message; and he should dispatch all in ten days time; but bid him look to it that he did not so much as peep into that silver pot he was to carry over to her, for it was as much as his life was worth. Young Chamberlain fairly

promised to perform all that was enjoined him, and at parting the old spectre tells him, "In the fourth and undermost box there are two cups of very precious stones incased in gold; take them also, for I freely give them to thee, and so, good night."

Chamberlain was glad he was rid of the spectre's company, and goes to his rest, and the next morning acquaints his master with the last night's adventure; his master bids him do as he was commanded, and had promised.

Accordingly, he gets into the parlour where he was directed, breaks up the boards of the planking, and finds all that the spectre had discovered to him. He had in money near 1200*l.* besides the other goods, pots, and cups, of which we shall here more anon. Never did any fellow's teeth water more after a sweet bit, than Chamberlain's eye did to be looking into the forbidden silver pot; but the fear of the spectre's menaces awed him, and kept him, much against his will, within bounds, though a hundred times a day he would be piddling about it, to see what was in it. However, at last he takes the pot, goes into a boat, crosseth over the barr at Barnstable and the Severn into Wales, and arrives at the place of the interview with the old apparition, which was about two miles and a half from the shore. At their first meeting, the spectre is very froward and angry, and tells him chidingly, "Sirrah, thou hast an earnest longing to be looking into this pot." "Not I," saith Chamberlain. "Nay, Sirrah, but thou hast," saith the spectre, "and therefore do not lie to me, but get presently unto thy master's daughter, and declare to her that message which I now tell thee, and take to her the pot." What this message was (though he was earnestly importuned by Madam Fortescue, the widow of John Fortescue, of Sprindlestone, in the Parish of Brixton, in the County of Devonshire, Esq.; from whom I had this relation in the year 1668, having been minister of that parish, to whom the aforesaid Chamberlain was steward of his manor, in the town and parish of Collumpton in the same county) he never would discover, but

craved the lady's excuse, because he had married the sister of her to whom he was to carry the silver pot, and he said it would cast a reproach upon his wife's blood and family. But to go on with the story, Chamberlain had a scrupulous conscience, and puts this case to the devil, "But what if Mrs. Betty won't take the pot?"—"Then," saith the spectre, "leave it with her; and tell her from me, that it were better she had and did take it, for she shall hear further from me."

Concerning this Mrs. Betty (by the way) she was the dearest of her father's children, who was exceeding fond of her; but she having got a great belly without a husband, in her father's house, her parents very severely reproved her for her great sin against God and her own soul, and the scandal to religion, and infamy to their family. She, after she had gotten it away, as before you have heard, quits her father's house, withdraws herself from her relations, and lives privately in Wales for about seven years, upon a portion that had been left her by her aunt or grandmother.

Well, Mr. Chamberlain, the next morning, betwixt five and six, comes to her house, knocks at the door, and down comes a young gentlewoman of about 27, with her breasts naked, her hair disheveled in a very forlorn and disconsolate condition, asks him what his business is; to whom Chamberlain replies, "Mrs. Betty, I am commanded to deliver you such a message from a spirit that hath appeared to me;" and he then tells her what was given him in charge, and delivers her the pot. She refuseth to take it; he tells her she must; she tells him she will not, but he must carry it to him from whom he had it. Chamberlain then replies, "Mrs. Betty, if you do not take it, it will be so much the worse for you, for I am ordered to leave it with you." With that fetching a deep sigh, and smiting her breasts, "Alas!" said she, "it was not for nothing that I have been so troubled this night, I was born to be miserable;" and so, without enquiring for her parents, or inviting him to drink, she takes the silver pot, and gets up into

her chamber. Chamberlain, having now discharged his trust and errand, returns to the sea-side, where finding a boat ready for Barnstable he enters into it, and before it launched off, Mrs. Betty comes down into it also, and sits just against him; but all the time they were passing over, never speaks a word to him, nor he to her. As soon as they were come to Barnstable, he goes into a tavern, and she to her father's house, whom seeing and her mother, she fell on her knees, and craved their blessing. Great was the joy of the whole house, of the presence of this stranger; but she, having sat and discoursed with them about a quarter of an hour, she riseth, and takes the key and hammer that hung in the parlour, and goes up stairs and unlocks a chamber door, and then locks it again upon her, where she was beating out a board in the window, and then nailed it fast again. What she took thence is not known; but having dispatched her business, she opens the door, locks it again, comes down, puts the key and hammer in their places, and having sat and discoursed with her parents about a quarter of an hour more, she then begs their blessing and departs, no intreaties or importunities being able to detain her one night, no not so much as to drink with them, but over to Wales she will go again, where indeed she returns, and lives about fourteen months; and then falling sick, she calls her maid to her, telling her, she would make her heir, and leave her 700l. after her death, which was now near at hand, if she would solemnly promise and swear to her, that as soon as she was buried, she would take the first opportunity to go over to Ireland, and carry that silver pot (but she must not look into it) to her uncle the lord bishop of Waterford, with her dying message to him, that if he did not repent of the sin he knew himself guilty of, he should be hanged.

The maid engageth with her mistress to perform her will, and a few hours after her mistress died. Mrs. Betty being dead, and her last will being noised abroad, a justice of peace near unto that place being informed

of this unusual gift and charge, sends his warrant to bring the maid and the silver pot before him; and he having examined her, she gives him this relation of her mistress's last will, and her injunction on her as aforesaid. The justice commands the cover of the pot to be taken off, and looking into it, finds the skeleton and bones of a poor little infant, which surprized the justice and all the spectators. Presently news of this was sent up to his majesty King Charles I. and the privy council, who dispatched an order to the council at Dublin, to seize the bishop of Waterford.

This and some other great crimes jumping against him at the same time, caused his arraignment, conviction, condemnation, and execution: but as he had been a great sinner above others, so he was an extraordinary penitent. The relation of his great repentance, was wrote and printed with his funeral sermon, which was preached by Doctor Barnard; and as I said at first, without the least notice or mention made of any of his crimes, or of this which I have now from most faithful credible witnesses, inserted in this paper.

As to the great treasure which the devil so freely bestowed upon Chamberlain, the cavaliers in those parts, during the civil wars, plundered him of all, except five broad pieces which he reserved, and the two cups, of which also there is this remarkable story and providence.

Mr. Chamberlain had by his wife (his master's daughter) two children. With these he and she travelled from Barnstable to Collumpton; the children were put into a pair of panniers, one in each, and the two cups tied upon the saddle betwixt them. As they were travelling in a fair summer's day, in July 1650, over Black Downe, in the way to Collumpton, about noon the sun was overcast with a very dark and thick cloud, and on a sudden it falls a thundering very grievously and terribly, and a great thunder-clap struck in between the poor children, which being done, the dark cloud vanished, and the heavens cleared up again as bright as before. Poor

Mrs. Chamberlain, all in terror and horror, supposing her children to have been destroyed by it, cries out, "Oh! my children, my children!" but coming up to them, she and her husband finds them laughing and playing, without any hurt. They then looked for their two cups of precious stones in chast in gold, but they found them both gone; the same hand that gave them to him ten years before, now took them away, no one having ever been one jot the better for the devil's gift. There went abroad a report in the country, that the devil took these cups out of Mr. Chamberlain's hand; but it was not so, but as I have now related, and as he related to that worthy lady, Madam Fortescue, of whose manors he was steward, and from whose mouth I had this remarkable providence, he having acquainted her with all these passages and particulars.

JOHN QUICK.

Interesting Varieties.

MEETING AND PARTING.

When in yon fading sky summer light closes,
And the lone spirit's sigh steals o'er the roses;
When in the waters still twilight is sleeping,
And on the purple hill night-dews are weeping;
When o'er the slumb'ring lake droops the fond willow,
While the breeze cannot wake even a billow;
When there is silence in each leafy bower,
There be our meeting—alone—in that hour.

Oh! let no cold eye of others be o'er us,
Stillness be spread on high, beauty before us;
Then down thy lovely cheek, silently stealing,
Should a warm tear speak the fulness of feeling.
Fondly I'll chide, sweet, that symbol of sadness;
Surely when lovers meet all should be gladness!

Stay, till along the sky daylight is dawning,
Then will we weep—'tis our moment of parting!

THE LIBERTINE REPULSED.

Hence, Belmour, deceitful! this instant retire!

No farther entreaties employ;
Nor meanly pretend any more to admire—
What basely you seek to destroy!

Say, youth, must I madly rush forward on shame,

If a traitor but artfully sighs,
And eternally part with my honour and fame,

For a compliment paid to my eyes?

If a passion dishonest be vilely profest,
Thro' tenderness must I incline,
And seek to indulge the repose of a breast
That would banish contentment from mine?

No, Belmour—proposals I can't but despise

Shall ne'er gain access to my ears:
Nor the man meet a glance of regard
From these eyes,
Who would fill them forever with tears.

Can the lover who thinks—nay, who wishes me base,

Expect I should ever be kind?
Or atone, with a paltry address to my face,
For the injury done to my mind?

Hence, Belmour, this instant, and banish each dream,

Of insolent vanity born:
Nor vainly imagine to gain my esteem
By deserving my hatred and scorn!

LOUISA.

CATALOGUES.—The first digested list of works in the English language, was published in 1595, by Andrew Maunsell, a bookseller of Lothbury.

WIGS.—The Papal dignity has sometimes condescended to interfere in affairs of very trifling importance. Such was the war of Benedict 13th, against the wigs of the clergy. In 1724 he published a Bull, imposing the punishment of ten days' imprisonment upon transgressors.

SCOTCHMEN.—In the reign of Eliza-

both an exact return of the number of foreigners resident in London was made out, from which it appeared that the number of Scotchmen was only forty!

CANDLES.—It appears from a curious document laid on the table of the House of Commons in 1822, that the annual consumption of Candles, both of Wax and Tallow, has greatly increased in England in the course of a century. The following are the quantities of Wax and Tallow upon which Duties were paid in 1721 and 1821:

	TALLOW.		WAX.
1721	lbs. 33,304,639	lbs.	88,031
1821	87,368,417		873,084

RABBITS, though looked upon as a species of luxury in London, are, or were, so numerous in remote parts of the country, that some frugal masters stuffed their apprentices with them six days out of seven, till the latter finding the grievance became intolerable, procured the insertion of a clause in their indentures, enacting that they should not be compelled to dine upon rabbits above a certain number of days in each week. A similar engagement in regard to SALMON was formerly entered into between the masters and apprentices of Exeter, when the fish was more plentiful in that quarter, and still forms a clause in most of the apprentices' indentures at Berwick-upon-Tweed.

SEGARS—"It is calculated that the value of the segars smoked in the United States of America in one year, is about 50 millions of dollars. In the year 1822, twelve millions four hundred and seventy-eight thousand were imported"—(*Philadelphia Gazette*, March, 1822.)

FLEET DITCH—This celebrated water-course was arched over in 1733. In that year there passed "An Act for filling up such part of the Channel of Bridewell Dock and Fleet Ditch as lies between Holborn Bridge and Fleet Bridge."

The Witty Nunchiau.

AGREEABLE TRANSFORMATION.—On the abdication of Buonaparte in 1814, it was stated in a fashionable party at Paris, that every thing was to be restored to the same state as in 1788. "Oh, I am delighted to hear that," exclaimed a lady, who had passed the bloom of youth, "for then I shall be only eighteen years of age."

STERLING MERIT.—In 1819, a great number of peers were created by Louis 18th; amongst the rest the son of a silversmith, who had the reputation of not being much attached to the Bourbons. At a conversation in one of the SALONS this became the topic of conversation; and some one remarked that his services had not merited so great a reward. "Perhaps not," replied the witty Countess, "but I can assure you his father's services were excessively brilliant and valuable."

A COGENT REASON.—Three servants came to a gentleman to be hired: on the first being asked what he could do, he answered that he could do every thing; the second said he could do any thing; but when the third was asked what he could do, he said that he could do nothing. "Nothing!" said the gentleman, "What do you mean by saying that?" "Why," said the servant, "Bob says he can do every thing, Bill that he can do any thing, therefore there can be nothing left for me to do." A. P.

An Irishman in the Patriot service in South America, writes to his friend in Boston:—"We compel the two armies of Royalists to run in different directions; one we drive before us, while the other is close at our heels."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—H. T. C. (May 10)
Petit, W. T. Evans, Walter, L. L. S.,
Jevon, J. C. A. B., W. M. W., Curious,
and Thalia.

THE NIC-NAO;

OR,

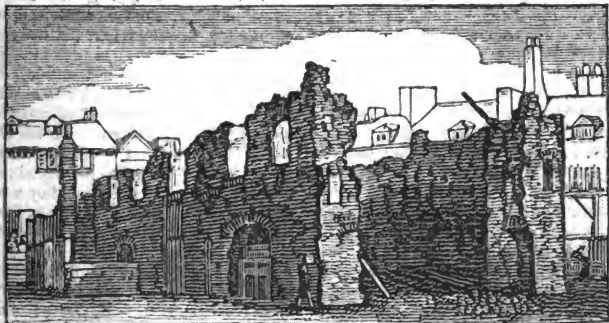
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 34.

SATURDAY, JULY 19, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



LITTLE LINCOLN'S-INN-FIELDS THEATRE.

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE; SECTION 10.—The performance of plays was entirely suspended for some years by the Ordinances of Parliament mentioned in Section 9, and in fact every species of public amusement was discouraged by the Puritans as far as lay in their power. This gloomy state of things continued without any relaxation till the year 1656, when Sir W. Davenant, who had produced some very successful dramas before the Revolution, projected a novel kind of entertainment, which he exhibited in Rutland House, at the upper end of Aldersgate Street. It consisted of a dramatic composition, in two parts, called "The Siege of Rhodes," the story of which was told in recitative, and illustrated by five scenes, being, as is thought, the first at all deserving the name which were used at a public theatre. It does not appear that his undertaking met with any interruption from the ruling powers; and emboldened by his success, he, in 1658, opened the Cock-pit, in Drury Lane, with a piece of the same description, called "The Cruelties of the Spaniards in Peru," which he also exhibited

without opposition. These proceedings were but the forerunners of the complete re-ascendancy of the drama, which was now about to recover nearly all its former splendour. In the year 1659, shortly before the restoration of Charles the Second, men's minds beginning to revive in some degree from the gloom into which they had been plunged by the events of the Revolution, the trammels imposed by Puritanism lost their hold, and a general desire for gaiety and amusement, began to manifest itself; inasmuch, that by the early part of 1659, no less than three companies of players were formed, viz.—one at the Red Bull; one at the Cock-pit; and another at the Salisbury-Court Theatre. It has already been mentioned in our description of the Red Bull (Sec. 7.), that in 1659 the performance of plays was recommenced there by a company formed from the scattered remains of the actors who flourished before the Revolution; here they continued till the latter end of 1660, when they removed to a new theatre which had been formed within the walls of a tennis court, standing in the centre of a

place then called Little Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, or Gibbon's Tennis-Court, near Clare-Market, which they opened on the 8th of November, with "Henry the Fourth," and remained there till 1663.—We shall again have occasion to notice this theatre in the course of our history, since it was rendered famous about thirty years afterwards, in consequence of being occupied by certain seceders from Drury-Lane, under Betterton, &c. in 1695.—After they quitted it, it does not appear ever again to have been made use of as a theatre, but was converted to less splendid, though perhaps more useful, purposes. On Sunday, 17th of Sept. 1809, the building, which, we believe, was at that time principally used as a carpenter's yard, accidentally took fire, and was almost totally destroyed. The above view represents the appearance of the ruins soon after the conflagration. The court in which this house stood is now called Bear-Yard, and as it is but a small place, the theatre must necessarily have been of very contracted dimensions. The new building which has been erected on its site, and which now occupies nearly the same space as the old one, will enable the spectator to judge pretty accurately of its size.

While the company from the Cock-pit were performing here, they came under the management of the famous Thomas Killigrew, who had been page of honour to Charles the First; to whose cause he firmly adhered; and at his death attached himself to the fortunes of his son, who immediately on his restoration appointed him groom of the bed-chamber; and on the 21st of August, 1660, issued a grant under the privy signet, authorizing him and Sir Wm. Davenant to erect two new play-houses; at the same time prohibiting any other theatrical representations in London, Westminster, or the suburbs, but those exhibited by them. Upon the grant of this patent, Killigrew commenced a new theatre in Drury-Lane, on the site of the old Cock-pit, to which his company, who were now known by the name of THE KING'S COMPANY, removed from Gibbon's

Tennis-Court in 1663, and opened it on the 8th April, with Beaumont and Fletcher's "Humorous Lieutenant."

The second company was formed in 1659, at the period when General Monk was marching out of Scotland, by one Rhodes, a bookseller, who had been wardrobe-keeper to the Black-friars company. He contrived to procure a license from the existing government, and opened the Cock-pit, in Drury-Lane, with a troop of the best performers he was able to collect. These in 1660 fell under the management of Davenant, who, on the 5th November in that year, removed them to the theatre in Salisbury Court; from which period they were called THE DUKE'S COMPANY, having been sworn in by the Lord Chamberlain to serve the Duke of York. At Salisbury Court they remained till 1662, when they removed to a new theatre which Davenant had built in Portugal Street, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, which they took possession of in March or April, commencing with the two parts of Davenant's "Siege of Rhodes," which had previously been rehearsed at Apothecaries' Hall, and were now acted twelve nights successively. The introduction of scenery on the stage may be dated from this period, as it was in these plays that scenes were first regularly used in a public theatre, an appellation to which the room fitted up by Davenant at Rutland House in 1656, as before-mentioned, could scarcely lay claim. It has been said by some writers that this company returned again to the Cock-pit, before they took possession of the house in Portugal Street, but this is incorrect, as that theatre was pulled down at this period, to make room for the new one building by Killigrew.

The third company, mentioned at the commencement of this Section, began to perform in 1660, under a license from Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels, at the theatre in Salisbury Court, the erection of which has been noticed in Section 6, article Whitefriars. They were under the direction of Mr. William Beeston, whose father, Christopher Beeston,

had been manager of the Cock-pit before the Revolution; but as upon the grant of exclusive licenses to Killigrew and Davenant, in 1660, all other persons were prohibited from exhibiting plays, their operations necessarily ceased, and they became incorporated with the two licensed companies. They can therefore be scarcely looked upon as a distinct body; and theatrical performances were henceforth for a long time monopolized by two companies,—the KING's, under Killigrew, and the DUKE's, under Davenant.—(Resumed at page 285.)

THE LONDON TOPOGRAPHER.

NO 1.

MANY writers have expatiated very eloquently upon the advantages to be derived from Walks in the Country. Without pretending to dispute the truth of their positions, I must be allowed to urge a few words in praise of the amusement that may be met with, in the course of Walks about Town; for, as Antolycus long since observed, "every lane's end, every shop, church, session, hanging, yields a careful map work." The inquisitive mind meets with something to gratify it in all quarters; and whether your peregrinations be directed to the east, west, north, or south, there is no part of this great city which does not offer to your attention subjects worthy notice. Being a bit of an oddity, I often occupy myself in noting down various trifling particulars which occur to me in my walks, far beneath the dignity of professed topographers and antiquaries to record in their works, but not destitute of interest to such triflers as myself. A few of my memoranda I forward for the *Nic-Nac*, and should they be favourably received, may probably trouble you again.

LAURENCE POUNTNEY.

THE CITY GATES.—Lud-gate, Ald-gate, and Cripplegate, were pulled down in the autumn of 1760. The materials were sold to one Blagden, a carpenter in Coleman Street.

Those of Ludgate fetched 148l.; those of Aldgate, 167l. 10s.; and those of Cripplegate, 91l. On Ludgate stood statues of King Lud and his two sons, and also of Queen Elizabeth. The latter was purchased by Alderman Gosling, and placed at the east side of the church of St. Dunstan, Fleet Street, where it still remains, and was re-gilt, &c. in 1821. What became of those of the Luds I cannot tell. The "*London Chronicle*" of Oct. 16, 1760, says, "It is left to the consideration of the Committee of City Lands where to fix the statues of King Lud and his two sons;" but, the decision of the said Committee, and the ultimate fate of the Lud family, I have never been able to ascertain.

UNLUCKY SHOP.—The several newspapers of the year 1759 contained the following paragraph:—

"Died, Mr. Henry Acton, a grocer, on Ludgate-Hill, the corner of the Old Bailey. He succeeded his brother, who was drowned at Mims' Wash, about four months ago. It is observable that four grocers have died successively in that shop, in about three years time, viz. Mr. Barton, Mr. Pemberton, Mr. Corbet Acton, and the now deceased."

Passing this shop the other day, I remarked that it is still occupied by a grocer, bearing a name very similar to that of the person whose death is recorded in the above paragraph. Should he chance to be superstitious, I hope this may not meet his eye.

HIGH GROUND.—At the eastern end of Newgate Street, there is a gloomy passage, called Panyer Alley, leading into Paternoster Row. In this place, there is a stone fixed into the wall, but in so obscure a situation, that it might be passed a hundred times without being noticed. It bears some rude sculpture, and the following inscription, in uncouth characters:—

When you have sought the City round,
Yet still this is the highest ground.

Aug. 27, 1688.

This may probably be true, as far as regards the City; but, towards the western extremity of the metropolis, the ground rises considerably. In fact, it is a popular saying, that Grosvenor Square is on a level with the top of the Monument.

ST. CATHERINE GREE.—A church of this name stands in St. Mary Axe, but the appellation is merely a corruption of St. Catherine Christ. To this church, a century and a half ago, the Directors of the East-India Company regularly proceeded in a body, on the safe arrival of a fleet of merchantmen, to offer up their thanks to Providence. How would such an act of devotion be ridiculed in this age of refinement and scepticism!

PAVING.—High Holborn has not been paved more than fifty years, and Tottenham Court Road not more than five or six. A newspaper dated 1768 says, "The paving is carrying on at Broad St. Giles's, and in several parts of Holborn, in order to complete that great avenue to the City as soon as possible."

THE CITY ROAD was first opened in 1761. The "London Chronicle" of Saturday, June 27, says, "The new road, which is to be called the City Road, from Old Street, across the fields to Islington, has been made in less than four months, and will be opened on Monday next."—For many years after, this neighbourhood was far from being half so frequented and populous as it is at present. A curious proof of this is given in a volume of the "Newgate Calendar," which, relating the history of a man executed in 1770 for robbing the mail, says, "one Saturday evening, he walked as far as Peerless Pool, in the City Road, and waited till such time as the post-boy came by with the Northern Mail, when he stopped and robbed him."—A footpad of the present day would find it a hazardous undertaking, were he to attempt to stop and rob the York Mail in the City Road.

PEERLESS POOL.—The mention of

this noted bathing-place, in the foregoing extract, reminds me that its name is a corruption of Perilous Pool, by which appellation it was anciently known, when the land hereabouts consisted only of fields lying between London and Hoxton (properly Hogden.) This alarming epithet, however, being thought unsuited to a bathing-place, gave way to the present more inviting one.—In Tabernacle Row, Old Street Road, are some other Baths, the water of which flows from a once celebrated spring, called St. Agnes Le Clair, but which, in process of time, has been vulgarised into Anniseed Clear, as it is now universally designated.

POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS—On the right-hand side of the New Road, leading to Paddington, stands the shell of a chapel, commenced about twelve years ago, and intended for the use of a Roman Catholic congregation, but which, owing to a misunderstanding amongst the proprietors, has never been finished. The vulgar in this part of the town, firmly believe that the Devil, for some politic purpose, opposed the completion of it, and regularly kicked down every night, all that the workmen had achieved during the preceding day. A similar superstition was entertained respecting a house in the Crescent at the end of Portland Place, the walls of which, for a long time, appeared in a dilapidated state; but, unluckily for the credit of the gossips, it has lately been completed, without the slightest opposition from his Satanic Majesty. Another article in the creed of the superstitious about here, is, that Rhodes, the great dairyman, cannot manage to keep more than 999 cows; because all he buys above that number, infallibly die. If you venture to question the probability of this, you are thought little better than an atheist.—(Resumed at p. 318.)

CONSTANCY.

CONSTANCY in love has been, from time immemorial, the theme of many a tender tale. Poets have portrayed its charms, and minstrels have sung

its praises. Extolled by all, it has ever dwelt upon the lips of lovers; and was so much esteemed in the golden days of chivalry, that a knight who was faithless to the lady of his affections, was considered as a recreant, tarnished with dishonour. In fact, the love which is not founded upon its pure precepts, is but a mere fleeting desire; a shadow, brilliant, but delusive, like the mirage of the desert. It is too true, that one may in vain seek among our own species for sufficient specimens of stability in love, to warrant our selecting a human being for an emblem of constancy; hence the gentle dove has, by general assent, been looked upon as the symbol of wedded faith. How rare, how very rare, are the records of an affection which has been fixed enough to resist the various and rapid fluctuations of human affairs, and which has but been rooted the more deeply by the obstacles and vexations that are every day to be met with in the world. That there have been, and still do exist, singular proofs of unbroken constancy, I am aware, and to relate one of these beautiful episodes in life is my present intention. Among them all, I have not met with one more truly exquisite than the following, or better calculated to excite at once the admiration and sympathy of the reader:—

The death of Mrs. Ross, celebrated for her beauty and accomplishments, about thirty-nine years ago, at Hammersmith, may not be wholly forgotten or unknown. This lady, possessed of high mental attainments, and personal attractions of the first order, had long cherished an attachment to Captain Charles Ross, who, in return, felt for her the same fervent and unalterable sentiment. Unhappily, the interference of interested relatives opposed their union, notwithstanding their mutual engagements. In this situation Captain Ross was obliged to leave the object of his affection, and repair with his regiment to America. Thither was he followed, some short time after, by the devoted lady, who, disguised in male apparel, braved the dangers of the ocean, and

was landed upon a foreign shore, an utter stranger in the land. After thus far attaining her wish, this delicate female had to encounter the difficulty of finding out her beloved, amid all the circuitous and entangled tracks of secret marchings, and counter-marchings, in a country encumbered with swamps and interminable forests. But, undaunted by these impediments, after a research marked by innumerable fatigues and adventures, which but few could have undergone, she succeeded in discovering Captain Ross lying in the woods, apparently dead, having been wounded in his breast by a poisoned arrow, in a skirmish with the Indians. Having acquired a slight knowledge of surgery in England, this heroic being now felt fortified by the circumstance, and rising superior to every selfish fear, she, with a noble devotion, preserved his life by extracting the poison from the wound with her lips, the only expedient that could have saved him from "that bourn from which no traveller returns!"—During eight weeks, with no other shelter from the sun or shower than that which the thick branches of the trees afforded, and exposed to every danger from the natives and the wild beasts, she continued to nurse him; and, having dyed her skin with lime and bark, and retaining the dress of a man, she remained unsuspected by the object of her solicitude. Under this arduous, but self-imposed task, she was supported by the transport of hearing the captain's unceasing aspirations of love and regret, for the dear and, as he then thought, distant possessor of his heart; and was affectingly charged by him to transmit his remains to her, in the event of his death, accompanied by his dying asseverations of constancy. Through her unparalleled care and tenderness, and aided by the interposition of Providence, he recovered, and, with her, removed to Philadelphia, where, as soon as she could procure a clergyman to unite her to him for ever, she resumed her feminine attire, and, accompanied by the priest, appeared before him as herself. In the touching words of the little narrative from which

I have chiefly drawn this brief sketch; "they lived, for the space of four years, in a state of fondness almost ideal to the present age of corruption, and their happiness was only interrupted by her declining health, and the poison which she had imbibed from the wound, not properly expelled, undermining her constitution." The knowledge the captain had of it, and his piercing regret at having been the occasion, preying upon him still more sensibly, he sunk beneath it, and died of a broken heart at John's Town.

E. S. G.

LETTER TO A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.

DEAR MADAM,—As you occupy a very handsome house, and are able to furnish it in a proper manner, will you excuse a friend who is anxious to give you a little advice on the subject?

Your building being formed of the finest materials, it will shew in a moment any flaw or spot that may accidentally tarnish the surface; it is of a proper height, a well-proportioned size, and built on a regular plan.

On the top stands a turret, of a globular form, with two chrysal windows in front; these are so constructed, as to command an extensive prospect, and, if always kept clean and bright, will prove of considerable utility, as well as a great ornament to the house: I advise you not to look through them at every object that passes, and above all things, I would have you shut them early at night, as many disagreeable circumstances happen from a neglect in this particular; you may open them as early as you please in a morning.

On each side, I observe a small portal to receive company; pray take care they do not always stand open; as you will be crowded with visitors, and perhaps with some you may, not like; let them never be shut against your worthy parents, a sincere friend, or a fellow creature in distress.

I took notice of one gate in the front, at which all your company goes out; in general I recommend it to you to keep it closely-barred, lest,

should any bad characters be seen forth coming, you draw a scandal on your residence; if at any time, on necessary occasions, it should be opened, I would lay a strict injunction of watchfulness on the two porters, who stand as sentinels, in liveries of scarlet, just without the ivory palisade.

Some ill-advised people paint the two pannels, just below the windows; an example which I hope you will shun rather than follow.

This part of the edifice is supported by a pillar of Corinthian marble, whose base is ornamented with two semi-globes of alabaster, before which, most prudent people draw a curtain of needle-work; a practice of late years strangely neglected by some, who, by such conduct, prove themselves grossly deficient in policy, propriety, and good taste.

Beneath, is the great hall, in which I understand you have a small closet of exquisite workmanship; this I suppose is the place of your secret retirement, open to none but yourself, or some faithful friend: take care always to keep it clean, and furnished with a small but well-chosen library of the best practical authors: enter it frequently, especially when you return from public worship, or from visiting your friends.

Avoid two opposite errors, which the owners of many houses fall into: let not the outside hall appear like the shop of an undertaker, fitting out a funeral, and crowded with gloomy objects, and woeful countenances, nor like a lord mayor's coach, bedaubed with gilding and finery; let it be plain, neat, and always clean, to convince the world that you attend more to utility than ornament.

You must not be surprised to find the tenement you inhabit subject to decay and accident; it is the common effect of time to efface beauty, and diminish strength; during the short space you have already lived in it, repairs have been frequently wanted; these, you must consider as plain intimations, that the house itself, in a certain number of years, will fall, and like the baseless fabric of a vision, leave not a wreck behind.

Recollect you are only a tenant at will, and may be turned out, with or without warning, for that was the condition on which it was let to you: be always ready therefore to go, at a moment's notice, and be particularly careful to keep the furniture in the globular turret, and the contents of the little closet, arranged in good order, that you may be able to lay your hand on them without perplexity or confusion.

It will be in vain to attempt to do it, as some have fancied they can, in the bustle and hurry of a sudden removal; a neglect of this important precaution has proved an irreparable injury to thousands.

Excuse this hasty epistle, pardon the liberty I have taken, and impute it to the warm zeal and sincere attachment of

Your humble servant, †

ACT OF FAITH.

In the Romish Church, a solemn day is held by the Inquisition for the punishment of heretics, and the absolution of the innocent accused. They usually contrive the day to fall on some great festival, that the execution may excite the more awe and regard; at least it is always on a Sunday.—The *Auto da Fé*, or Act of Faith, may be called the last act of the Inquisitorial tragedy; it is a kind of gaol-delivery, appointed as oft as a competent number of prisoners in the Inquisition are convicted of heresy, either by their own voluntary or extorted confession, or on the evidence of certain witnesses. The process is thus:—In the morning they are brought into a great hall, where they have certain habits put on, which they are to wear in the procession. The procession is led up by Dominican Friars; after which come the penitents, all in black coats without sleeves, and bare-footed, with a wax candle in their hands. These are followed by the penitents who have narrowly escaped being burnt, who over their black coats have flames painted with their points turned downwards. Next come the negative and relapsed, who are to be burnt, having flames on

their habits pointing upwards. After these come such as profess doctrines contrary to the faith of Rome, who, besides flames pointing upwards, have their picture painted on their breasts, with dogs, serpents, and devils, all open-mouthed about it. Each prisoner is attended with a familiar of the Inquisition; and those to be burnt have also a Jesuit on each hand, who is continually preaching to them to abjure. After the prisoners, come a troop of familiars on horseback, and after them the Inquisitors, and other officers of the Court, on mules; last of all, the Inquisitor-General, on a white-horse, led by two men with black hats and green hat-bands. A scaffold is erected big enough for two or three thousand people, at one end of which are the prisoners, at the other the Inquisitors. After a sermon, made up of encomiums of the Inquisition, and invectives against heretics, a priest ascends a desk near the middle of the scaffold, and having taken the abjuration of the penitents, recites the final sentence of those who are to be put to death; and delivers them to the secular arm, earnestly beseeching at the same time the secular power not to touch their blood, or put their lives in danger. The prisoners being thus in the hands of the civil Magistrate, are presently loaded with chains, and carried first to the secular gaol, and from thence in an hour or two brought before the civil Judge; who, after asking in what religion they intend to die, pronounces sentence on such as declare they die in the communion of Rome, that they shall be first strangled, and then burnt to ashes; on such as die in any other faith, that they be burnt alive. Both are immediately carried to the Ribera, the place of execution; where there are as many stakes set up as there are prisoners to be burnt, with a quantity of dry furze about them. The stakes of the professed, that is, such as persist in their heresy, are about four yards high, having a small board towards the top for the prisoner to be seated on. The negative and relapsed being first strangled and burnt, the professed mount their stakes by a ladder;

and the Jesuits, after several repeated exhortations to be reconciled to the church; part with them, telling them they leave them to the devil who is standing at their elbow to receive their souls, and carry them with him into the flames of hell. On this a great shout is raised, and the cry is, "Let the dogs' beards be made;" which is done by thrusting flaming furze fastened to long poles against their faces, 'till they are burnt to a coal, which is accompanied by the loudest acclamations of joy.—At last, fire is set to the furze at the bottom of the stake, over which the professed are chained so high, that the top of the flame seldom reaches higher than the board they sit on; so that they rather seem roasted than burnt.—There cannot be a more lamentable spectacle; the sufferers continually cry out, while they are able, *Misericordia, per amor de Dios. 'Pity for the love of God!'* yet it is beheld by all sexes and ages with transports of joy and satisfaction.

The Wit's Nunchion.

IRISH WIT.—The inferior class of people in Ireland have a quaintness and humour, truly characteristic; and which is often displayed to the infinite amusement of their hearers. When Lord Townshend, however, arrived there as Lord Lieutenant, he complained that he could not distinguish this particular quality, of which he had previously heard a very entertaining account. The gentlemen around observed, that as his Excellency never had any intercourse with the lower sort, he could not expect to be acquainted with their general manners: but advised him to converse personally with them, if he wished to form a correct opinion. His lordship, as a man of wit and whim, readily assented, and the same evening sallied forth incog. with several others. Passing along Ormond Quay, he went up to a man who was selling some

trifles, and after conversing very affably for some time, and remarking on a Highland regiment, then passing, bought what came to a few shillings. Having no silver, he pulled out his purse, and requested change for a guinea. "For a guinea!" exclaimed Pat, staring him full in the face. "Arrah; by Jasus, now (pointing to the Highlanders) you might as well ask one of them for a PAIR OF BREECHES!"

The smartness of the answer, and the propriety of the instantaneous comparison, forcibly excited his lordship's risible faculties, and making Paddy a present of the guinea, he walked off to join his company.

MR. PRATT, brother to the late Lord Camden, was a very singular character.—He had a remarkably tenacious memory, and was reckoned one of the first whist-players in the kingdom. He remembered all the cards that were played in a hand, from an ace down to a deuce, and could recapitulate their order of playing, which he has done for a considerable wager. He dined every day, alone, at the *Queen's Head Tavern*, in Holborn, and always drank a bottle of Port to himself. He occupied chambers in Gray's-inn, and lived in the highest floor, to prevent any disturbance over head. His taciturnity seemed even to exceed his memory; a remarkable instance of which he gave in a voyage to the East Indies, when in the service of the Company.—He had not opened his lips to any person on board till they arrived off the Cape of Good Hope. At that time, one of the sailors crying out, from the top-mast-head, that he saw land; Mr. Pratt was induced to say, "Damn the rascal, I perceived it ABOVE HALF AN HOUR AGO."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—Albumania and A. P.
A Letter lies at the Office for Curious.

THE NIC-NAO:

OR,

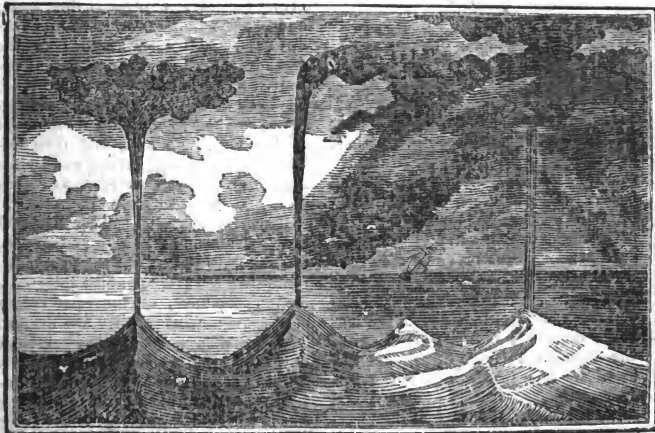
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 35.

SATURDAY, JULY 26, 1823.

VOL. I.

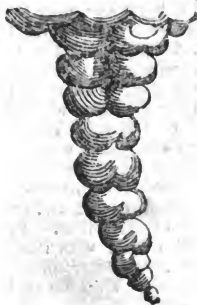
"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



WHIRLWINDS AND WATER-SPOUTS.

SIR Richard Phillips, in describing a water-spout, observes, "it happened to him, on the 27th of June, 1817, about seven in the evening, to witness the formation, operation, and extinction, of what is called a water-spout. His attention was drawn to a sudden hurricane which nearly tore up the shrubs and vegetables in the western gardens, and filled the air with leaves and small collections of the recently cut grass. Very dark clouds had collected over the adjoining country, and some stormy rain, accompanied by several strokes of lightning, followed this hurricane of wind. The violence lasted a few minutes, and the writer being drawn to an eastern balcony, it was evident that a whirlwind agitated the variety of substances which had been raised into the air. The storm proceeded from west to east, that is, from Hampstead over Kentish Town towards Holloway. In about five minutes, in the direction

of the latter place, a magnificent projection was visible from the clouds, like what is here represented :



It descended two-thirds of the distance from the clouds to the earth, and evidently consisted of parts of clouds descending in a vortex, violently agitated like smoke from the chimney of a furnace recently supplied with fuel.

It then shortened, and appeared to be drawn up towards the stratum of clouds, and presently it assumed this appearance:—



It finally drew itself into the cloud; but a small cone, or projecting thread, of varying size and length, continued for ten minutes. At the time, and for half an hour after, a severe storm of rain was visibly falling from the mass of clouds connected with it, the extent being exactly defined by the breadth of Holloway, Highgate, and Hornsey. About two hours after, on walking from Kentish Town towards Holloway, it was found that one of the heaviest torrents of rain remembered by the inhabitants had fallen around the foot of Highgate hill; and some persons having seen the projecting cloud, an absolute belief existed that a water-spout had burst at the crossing of the new and old roads. On proceeding towards London, various accounts, agreeing with the superstition or pre-conceived notions of the bye-standers, were given; but, in the farm-yard at the three-mile stone, it appeared that some hay-makers were stacking hay from a waggon which stood between two ricks, and that the same whirlwind which passed over Kentish Town, had passed over the loaded waggon with an impetus sufficient to carry it above twenty yards from its station, and to put the men upon it, and on the rick, in fear of their lives. Passing the road, it carried with it a stream of hay, and, nearly unroofing a shed on the other side, filled the air to a great height with fragments of hay, leaves, and boughs of trees, which resembled a vast flight of birds. The family of the writer beheld the descending cloud, or water-spout, pass over, and they saw its train, which, at the time, they took to be a flight of birds. They

afterwards beheld the descending cloud draw itself upward, and they, and other witnesses, describe it as a vast mass of smoke working about in agitation: to them it was nearly vertical in a northern direction; and to persons a quarter of a mile north, it was nearly vertical in a southern direction; and all agree that it drew itself up without rain, and was followed near the earth by the train of light bodies. It appeared also, on various testimony, to let itself down in a gradual and hesitating manner, beginning with a sort of knob in the cloud, and then descending lower, and curling and twisting about, till it shortened, and gradually drew itself into the cloud."

The inferences which Sir Richard draws from what he saw and heard, are as follow:—"That the phenomenon called a water-spout is a mere collection of clouds, of the same rarity as the mass whence they are drawn. That the descent is a mechanical effect of a whirlwind, which creating a vacuum, or high degree of rarefaction, extending between the clouds and the earth, the clouds descend in it by their gravity, or by the pressure of the surrounding clouds or air. That the convolutions of the descending mass, and the sensible whirlwind felt at the earth, as well as the appearance of the commencement, increase and decrease of the mass, all demonstrate the whirl of the air to be the mechanical cause. That the same vortex, whirl, or eddy, of the air, which occasions the clouds to descend, occasions the loose bodies on the earth to ascend. That, if in this case the lower surface had been water, the same mechanical power would have raised a body of foam, vapour, and water, towards the clouds. That, as soon as the vortex or whirl exhausts or dissipates itself, the phenomena terminate by the fall to the lower surface of the light bodies or water, and by the ascent of the cloud. That when water constitutes the light body of the lower surface, it is probable that the aqueous vapour of the cloud, by coalescing with it, may occasion the clouds to condense, and fall at that point, as through a syphon. That if the descending

cloud be highly electrified, and the vortex pass over a conducting body, as a church steeple, it is probable it may be condensed by an electrical concussion, and fall at that spot—discharging whatever has been taken up from the lower surface, and producing the strange phenomena of showers of frogs, fish, &c. And, lastly, it appears certain, that the action of the air on the mass of clouds, pressing towards the mouth of the vortex as to a funnel (which, in this case, it exactly represented), occasioned such a condensation as to augment the simultaneous fall of rain to a prodigy.

In November, 1801, about twenty miles from Trieste, in the Adriatic sea, a water-spout was seen eight miles to the southward: round its lower extremity was a mist, twelve feet high, nearly the form of an Ionian capital, with very large volutes, the spout resting obliquely on its crown. At some distance from this spout, the sea began to be agitated, and a mist rose to the height of about four feet: a projection then descended from the black cloud which was impending, and met the ascending mist about twenty feet above the sea, the last ten yards of the distance being described with great rapidity. A cloud of a light colour appeared to ascend in this cloud like quicksilver in a glass tube. The first spout then snapped at about one third of its height, the inferior part subsiding gradually, and the superior curling upward.

Several other projections from the cloud, appeared with corresponding agitations of the water below, but not always in spouts vertically under them: seven spouts in all were formed; and two other projections re-absorbed. Some of the spouts were not only oblique, but curved, the ascending cloud moving most rapidly in those which were vertical. They lasted from three to five minutes, and their dissipation was not attended by any fall of rain. For some days before the weather had been very rainy, with a S. E. wind; but not any rain had fallen on the day of observation.

The corresponding phenomena of whirlwinds have been occasionally pro-

ductive of much mischief, as the following brief narratives will show:—On the 30th of October, 1669, about six in the evening, the wind being then westwardly, a formidable whirlwind, scarcely of the breadth of sixty yards, and which spent itself in about seven minutes, arose at Ashby, in Northamptonshire. Its first assault was on a milk-maid, whose pail and hat were taken from off her head, and the former carried many score of yards from her, where it lay undiscovered for some days. It next stormed a farm-yard, where it blew a waggon body off the axle-trees, breaking in pieces the latter, and the wheels, three of which, thus shattered, were blown over a wall. Another waggon, which did not, like the former, lie across the passage of the wind, was driven with great speed against the side of the farmhouse. A branch of an ash-tree, so large that two stout men could scarcely lift it, was blown over a house without damaging it, although torn from a tree 100 yards distant. A slate was carried nearly 200 yards, and forced against a window, the iron bar of which it bent. Several houses were stripped; and, in one instance, this powerful gust, or stream of air, forced open a door, breaking the latch; whence it passed through the entry, and, forcing open the dairy door, overturned the milk pails, and blew out three panes of glass. It next ascended to the chambers, and blew out nine other panes. Lastly, it blew a gate-post, fixed two feet and a half in the ground, out of the earth, and carried it many yards into the fields.

On the 20th of October, 1731, at one in the morning, a very sudden and terrific whirlwind, having a breadth of two hundred yards, was experienced at Cerne-Abbas, in Dorsetshire. From the south-west side of the town, it passed the north-east, crossing the centre, and unroofing the houses in its progress. It rooted up trees, broke others in the middle, of at least a foot square, and carried the tops a considerable distance. A sign-post, five feet by four, was broken off six feet in the pole, and carried across a street forty feet in breadth, over a

house opposite. The pinnacles and battlements of one side of the church-tower were thrown down, and the leads and timber of the north aisle broken by their fall. A short time before the air was remarkably calm. It was estimated that this sudden and terrible gust did not last more than two minutes.

VEGETABLE PRODUCTIONS.

It is remarkable that this country has not one useful vegetable which it can call its own: we have imported every thing of the kind—from the luxurious pine to the humble potatoe. The following list of the earth's productions, with the countries from which they originally came, may, perhaps, be new and interesting to such of our readers as have not considered the subject:—

Rye and wheat were first imported from Tartary and Siberia; barley and oats unknown, but certainly not indigenous in Britain, because we are obliged to cultivate them. Asparagus was first imported from Asia; cresses and lettuce from Holland; fennel from the Canary Islands; garlic from the East; gourds from Astrachan; horse-radish from China; kidney-beans from the East Indies; lentil from France; potatoes from Brazil; * rice from Ethiopia; shallots from Siberia; tobacco from America. Sugar was originally brought from India, by the introduction of the plant *Saccharum Officinarum*. "Arabia," says Pliny, "produces Saccharum, but the best is in India: it is a honey collected from reeds; a sort of white gum, brittle between the teeth; the largest pieces do not exceed the size of a hazel-nut, and are only used in medicine." Sugar was first made from the reeds in Egypt, from

thence the plant was carried into Sicily, which, in the 12th century supplied many parts of Europe with that commodity; and thence, at a period unknown, it was brought into Spain by the Moors. From Spain it was planted in the Canary Islands and in the Madeiras, by the Portuguese. This happened about the year 1500: afterwards the reed was carried to St. Domingo and the Brazils. Sugar was then a most expensive luxury, and used only in feasts, or for medicinal purposes.

Nor are we less indebted to other distant countries for our finest flowers:—The jessamine came from the East Indies; the tulip from Cappadocia; the daffodil from Italy; the lily from Syria; the tube-rose from Java and Ceylon; the carnation and pink from Italy; to which may be added the elder-tree, imported from Persia, and many others might be mentioned. The learned Linaire first introduced from Italy the damask-rose. Thomas Lord Cromwell, in the reign of Henry VIII. enriched our gardens with three different plums. In the reign of Elizabeth, Edmund Grindall, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, transplanted hither the tamarisk.—Oranges were brought hither by one of the Carew family. To Sir Walter Raleigh we are indebted for that useful root the potatoe. Sir Anthony Ashley first cultivated cabbages in this country. The fig trees, planted by Cardinal Pole, in the reign of Henry VIII. are still standing at Lambeth. Sir Richard Weston brought clover-grass into England, in 1645. The mulberry is a native of Persia, and is said to have been introduced in 1570. The chesnut is a native of the south of Europe; the walnut of Persia, but the time of its introduction is unknown. The apricot came from America, about 1652. The plum is a native of Asia, and was imported into Europe by the Crusaders; and the damascene takes its name from the city of Damascus. The Alpine strawberry was first cultivated in the king's garden, in 1760. The peach is a native of Persia. The nectarine was introduced about 1562. Cherries are

* This root grows wild in the environs of Lima, and has also been found wild in Chili. It is cultivated by the Indians of both countries, who call it *Papas*. It grows spontaneously among the rocks at Monte Viedo, and in the forests near Santa Fi de Bogata; the wild plants, however, produce very small roots, of bitter taste.

said to have come originally from Cerasus, a city of Pontus, from whence Lucullus brought them into Italy, and they were introduced into Britain about the year 53. The quince was cultivated in this country in Gerard's time. The red queen-apple was so called in compliment to Queen Elizabeth. The cultivation of the pear is of great antiquity, for Pliny mentions twenty different kinds. Most of our apples originally came from France. Sir Walter Raleigh is well known to have introduced the use of tobacco into England; he is the person king James I. hints at, when he speaks of the first author and introduction of it being then well remembered, and is said to have been so partial to it, that he took, says a nearly contemporary writer, "a pipe of tobacco a little before he went to the scaffold, which some formal persons were scandalized at; but I think," he adds, "'twas well and properly done to settle his spirits." The same author adds the following curious anecdotes on this subject:—"In my part of North Wilts (Malmesbury hundred) it was brought into fashion by Sir Walter Long. They had, at first, silver pipes, but the ordinary sort used a walnut shell and a straw. I have heard my grandfather Lyfe say, that one pipe was handed from man to man round the table. Sir Walter Raleigh being on a stand in Sir R. Poyntz's park, at Acton, took a pipe of tobacco, which made the ladies quit it, till he had done. Within these 35 years," he adds (about 1630), "it was sold for its weight in silver. I have heard some of our old yeomen neighbours say, that when they went to Malmesbury or Chippenham market, they culled out their biggest shillings to lay in the scales against the tobacco. Now the customers of it are the greatest his majesty (Charles II.) hath."

C. S.

Interesting Varieties.

VOLTAIRE.

The following stanzas, which display a greater command of the English

language than some of his attempts in prose would lead us to expect, were addressed to Lady Hervey by Voltaire, during his stay in England, about 1726:—

Hervey, would you know the passion
You have kindled in my breast?
Trifling is the inclination
Which by words can be express.

In my silence see the lover;
True love is by silence known;
In my eyes you'll best discover
All the influence of your own.

ON THE DEATH OF A BEAUTIFUL BOY.

I saw thee, sweet boy, in the pride of thy youth,
Like a flow'r in its loveliness blowing,
All bright in the beaming and beauty of truth,
And thine eye in its innocence glowing.

I saw thee; nor thought, 'mid the hue of that wreath
Which the rose and the pale lily wove
On thy fair-budding cheek, the foul mildew of death
Lurk'd to blight the fair promise of love.

I lov'd thee, sweet boy; for, in thee were enshrin'd
What my youth and my fancy had known,
Ere ingratitude rose, like the dark desert wind,
Ere despondency made me her own.

Then, peace to thy spirit, as spotless and sweet
As this tear of sincerity given!
Then, peace to thy spirit! again we shall meet,
Sweet boy, in yon beautiful heaven.

A MOTHER.

SUNDAY.

We often hear it asserted that this is a Sabbath-breaking age. Perhaps there may be great truth in the remark, but it seems hardly fair to brand this age exclusively with such an appellation: as if at no preceding period, people had been guilty of a like crime. If partaking in certain amusements constitutes Sabbath-breaking,

our forefathers appear to have been ten times more depraved than their posterity. Prynne, in his "Histriomastix," p. 242, draws a pretty picture of their pranks on Sundays—let us hope that it is a little exaggerated. After some severe animadversions upon the custom which then commonly prevailed of dancing on the Lord's Day, he says—

"Alas! it is lamentable to see the wicked boldness of those that will be counted God's people, who think nothing at all of keeping and hallowing the Sunday. And these people are of two sorts. The one sort, if there be business to doe, though there be no extreme need, they must not spare the Sunday; they must ride and journey on the Sunday, &c.; they must keepe markets and faires on the Sunday; finally, they use all dayes alike; working-dayes, and holy-dayes are all one. The other sort is worse: for although they will not travell nor labour on the Sunday, as they do on the weeke day, yet they will not rest in holinesse, as God comandeth; but they rest in ungodlinesse and filthinesse; prancing in their pride; pranking and pricking; pointing and painting themselves, to be gorgeous and gay; they rest in excesse and superfluity, in gluttony and drunkennesse; like rats and swine, they rest in brawling and rayling, in quarrelling and fighting; they rest in wantonnesse, in toyish talking, in filthy fleshlinesse; so that it doth too evidently appeare that God is more dishonoured, and the Devill better served, on the Sunday, than upon all the daies in the weeke besides."

THE ROSE.

IMITATED FROM THE FRENCH.

Child of the tears of morning,
Whom playful zephyrs love,
Bright queen of flow'rs, adorning
Young Flora's gay alcove,—
The dewy hours are fleeting,
Awake, then, from repose,
And, breathing sweets around thee,
Thy vernal charms disclose.
Yet, stay!—awhile repose thee,
Thy hour of fading's nigh;
The breeze that shall unclothe thee,
Will waft thy parting sigh. TYRO.

ALL-PERVADING LOVE.

IMITATED FROM THE FRENCH.

The summer-breezes kiss the skies,
The Rose by Zephyr's preat;
To kiss the shore the ocean flies,
Love springs to kiss the breast.
Thus nature all delights to kiss;
Then why should we decline?
Ah! why forego the balmy bliss
That lures young lips to join.

TYRO.

ANGLING.

[THE following lines are by the late Dr. Wolcot (Peter Pindar), who seems to have had as much distaste to angling as Dr. Johnson. Doctors have differed on this as on most other subjects. Isaac Walton's pleasant book on Angling is doubtless known to many of our readers. Archdeacon Paley was a great angler; and the Author of "a Treatise on Angling" is so fervent in his admiration of the sport, as to gravely affirm, that "only three Apostles attended our Saviour to the Mount, on his Transfiguration, and those three were all fishermen."]

BALLADE TO A FISH OF THE BROOKE.

Why flyest thou away with fear?
Trust me, there's nought of danger near;
I have no wicked hooke;
All covered with a snaring baite,
Alas! to tempt thee to thy fate,
And dragge thee from the brooke.

O harmless tenant of the flood,
I do not wish to spill thy blood;
For Nature unto thee
Perchance has given a tender wife.
And children dear, to charme thy life,
As she hath done to me.

Enjoy thy streame, O harmless fish,
And when an Angler, for his dish,
Through Gluttony's vile sin,
Attempts,—a wretch,—to pull thee out,
God give thee strength, O, gentle Trout,
To pull the raskall in!

MATRIMONY.

I will not have a man that's tall;
A man that's little's worse than all,
I will not have a man that's fair;
A man that's black I cannot bear.
A young man is a constant pest;
An old one would my room infest.

A man of sense they say is proud;
A senseless one is always loud.
A man that's rich I'm sure won't have
me;

And one that's poor, I fear, would starve
me.

A sailor always smells of tar:
A rogue, they say, is at the Bar.
A sober man I will not take;
A gambler soon my heart would break.
Of all professions, tempers, ages,
Not one my buoyant heart engages;
Yet strange and wretched is my fate,—
I still sigh for the marriage state.

INKLE AND YARICO—Bryan Edwards, in his History of the West Indies, observes, "Such of my readers as have sympathized with the unfortunate Yarico, may not be sorry to hear that she bore her misfortunes with greater philosophy than they have hitherto fancied. The story was first related by Ligon, who after praising poor Yarico's excellent complexion, which he says, 'was a bright bay,' and stating that she had 'small breasts, with nipples of porphyrie,' observes, that 'she chanced afterwards to be with child by a christian servant, and being very great, walked down to a woode, in which was a pond of water, and there, by the side of the pond, brought herself a-bed, and in three hours came home with the child in her arms, a lusty boy, frolicke and lively.'"

GARRICK

Had once occasion to file a bill in Chancery against an Attorney at Hampton, to set aside an agreement surreptitiously obtained for the purchase of a house there; and whilst Edmund Hoskins, Esq. was preparing the draft of the bill, Garrick wrote him the following lines:—

"TO HIS COUNSELLOR AND FRIEND,
EDMUND HOSKINS, ESQ. TOM FOOL
SENDS GREETING.

"On your care must depend the success
of my suit,

The contest I mean 'bout the house in
dispute;

Remember, my friend, an attorney's my
foe,

And the worst of his tribe, though the
best are so so.

In law, as in life, I know well 'tis a rule,
That a knave will be ever too hard for a
fool;

To which, one exception your client im-
plores,

That a fool may for once kick a knave
out of doors."

FIRST AND SECOND.

The following smart Impromptu was
produced some years since, on hear-
ing MRS. SECOND sing at the Musical
Festival, at Birmingham:—

It was said by the world (and dispute it
who durst),

That of all vocal prodigies Mara was
FIRST.

But as flowers in autumn will fade and
decay,

And leaves shrink and dry, till they drop
from the spray;

So the vet'ran in fame, past her hey-day
and prime,

Must, like time-beating Stephen, be
beaten by Time.*

And though not convinc'd, while with
thousands imburst,

That the first may be last, and the last
may be first;

Though Mara 'mongst warblers the
FIRST is now reckon'd,

Not remote is the time when the FIRST
will be SECOND.

STEPHEN KEMBLE,

In 1819, wrote the following acknow-
ledgment of a present:—

"TO MY DEAR FRIEND KEAN, ON
HIS PRESENTING ME WITH
A GOLD SNUFF-BOX.

"Thy gift, my friend, I value; not the
ore;

Nor yet the artist's masterly design:
But Truth and Talent love I ten times
more,

And these 'rare qualities' I know are
thine.

"STEPHEN GEORGE KEMBLE."

Theatre Royal, Drury-Lane,
May 19, 1819.

* This alludes to the old Epitaph on
a Fiddler named Stephen:—

"Stephen and Time are now both even,
Stephen BEAT TIME, now Time beats
Stephen."

The Wit's Nunchion.

A QUERY ANSWERED.—During the time when a concourse of people had assembled in the fields near Hackney, to witness Mr. Sadler's ascension in his balloon, a too officious zealot for religion, raised on an eminence, attempted to preach to them, taking as his text these words from Scripture, "But what went ye out for to see?" (Matthew xi. 8.) A sailor who stood by, immediately exclaimed, "Why, b—t your eyes, the balloon, to be sure!"

SUICIDE EXTRAORDINARY.—The following instance of coolness occurs in the list of deaths given in "The Gentleman's Magazine," Vol. 1, p. 444:—

"October 24, 1731.—Timothy Guley, Esq. of Chiswick, Captain in the 2nd Regiment of Foot Guards, getting out of bed, said to his wife, 'Nanny, good bye;' then shot himself in the head with a pistol, which lodged two balls in the hinder part. The surgeons finding it difficult to extract them, he called for his nut-crackers, saying he would take them out himself. He lived two days."

SOME time since, a wicked wag wrote a letter in the name of Mr. Michael K— (the well-known singer and music-seller) to the Dowager Countess C—, requesting permission for him (Mr. K) to wait on her ladyship the following day at one o'clock, "on very particular private business;" and at the same time dispatched another in the lady's name to Mr. K. requesting to see him at the same hour. Mr. K. accordingly attended at the appointed time, and found the Countess anxiously waiting his arrival. After the usual salutations, her ladyship requested her visiter to seat himself beside her on the sofa, where, for the space of five minutes, they sat in a state more easily imagined than described, each expecting the other to

communicate the object of the interview. At length Lady C.'s patience became exhausted, and she eagerly exclaimed, "Come, Mr. K., OUT WITH IT! What's the use of SHILLY SHAL-LYING in this way?" The man of music was astonished, but having a very fine pedal harp to dispose of, he imagined the Countess wished to become a purchaser, and therefore observed, "That he presumed her ladyship, before matters were finally settled, would like to see his instrument?"—"Your instrument, sir!" cried her ladyship: "what INSTRUMENT?" Mr. K. begged pardon if he had mistaken the object of her ladyship's wishes, and politely enquired what he could do for her, and for what purpose she had honoured him with the interview? The lady now became outrageous, and had not Mr. K. produced an ECLAIRCISSEMENT by exhibiting the note, he would probably have fallen a victim to the indignation of the Dowager.

ADVERTISEMENT.

"Inhuman man! curse on thy barbarous heart, and blasted be thy murdering eye."

TEN DOLLARS REWARD.—I will give the above reward, to any person that will inform me of the base poltroon, who, on the night of the 2nd instant, stabbed my DOG through the fore shoulder. The poor inoffensive brute would not molest any person.—Such is his character in the neighbourhood, and none but a base born scoundrel would be guilty of such a cruel act.

ROBERT HARBISON.

SPORTING PUN.—On the Duke of York's Moses winning a match at Ascot, his Royal Highness was observed to look very thoughtful. A spectator asked his companion what he imagined the Royal Sportsman could be pondering on? "Why, you know," replied he, "that the duke is a bishop, and he is doubtless thinking of Moses and the Profits."

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

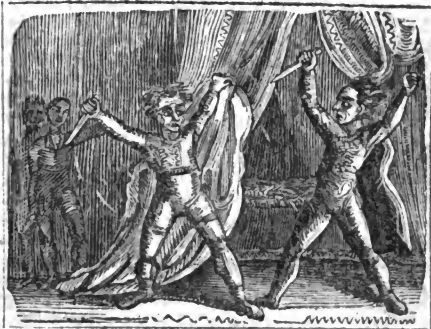
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

NO. 36.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 2, 1823.

VOL. I.

⁴⁴ Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



ASSASSINATION OF RIZZIO.

THE life and unfortunate death of Rizzio, the favourite of Queen Mary, with the preceding and succeeding particulars of the event, are, no doubt, known to most of our readers: but, considering the following brief sketch to contain some additional interesting features of the transaction, we felt it incumbent on us to lay it before our weekly guests:—The castle of Edinburgh is well situated, and in those days, when fire-arms were not used, was probably impregnable. The furniture and hangings of the rooms are preserved in which the unhappy Mary lived, and, in particular, of that in which her favourite Rizzio was murdered. The room itself, where he received the first wound, and where he clung round his royal mistress for protection, is small: the dark stair-case, on which the conspirators planted themselves, leads into it. Hence he was dragged, and, with innumerable stabs, expired in an adjoining chamber.

The blood to this hour remains on the floor; nay, so deeply has it penetrated, that the boards, although repeatedly plained, are still the recorders of that bloody deed. Dr. Robertson's account of it, in his "History of Scotland," is as follows:—

"On the 9th of March, 1566, Morton entered the court of the palace, with a hundred and sixty men, and, without noise, or meeting with any resistance, seized all the gates. While the queen was at supper, with the Countess of Argyle, Rizzio, and a few domestics, the king suddenly entered the apartment by a private passage. At his back was Ruthven, with that ghastly and horrid look which long sickness had given him: three or four of his trusty accomplices followed. Such an unusual appearance alarmed those who were present. Rizzio instantly apprehended that he was the victim at whom the blow was aimed, and, in the utmost

frenzy, endeavoured to defend himself: numbers of armed men rushed into the chamber: Ruthven drew his dagger, and with a furious mien and voice, commanded Rizzio to leave a place of which he was unworthy, and which he had occupied too long.—Mary employed tears and entreaties, and threatenings, to save her favourite; but notwithstanding all these, he was torn from her by violence; and, before he could be dragged through the next apartment, the rage of his enemies put an end to his life, by piercing his body with fifty-six wounds."

RODNEY.

(FROM CUMBERLAND'S MEMOIRS, 1806.)

"It happened to me to be present, and sitting next to Admiral Rodney at table, when the thought seemed first to occur to him of breaking the French line, by passing through it in the heat of the action. It was at Lord George Germain's house, at Stoneland, after dinner, when, having asked a number of questions about the manœuvring of columns, and the effect of charging with them on a line of infantry, he proceeded to arrange a parcel of cherry stones, which he had collected from the table, and forming them as two fleets drawn up in line, and opposed to each other, he at once arrested our attention, which had not been very generally engaged by his preparatory enquiries, by declaring he was determined so to pierce the enemy's line of battle (arranging his manœuvre at the same time on the table), if ever it was his fortune to bring them into action. I dare say this passed with some as a mere rhapsody, and all seemed to regard it as a very perilous and doubtful experiment; but landmen's doubts and difficulties made no impression on the admiral, who, having seized the idea, held it fast, and, in his eager animated way, went on manœuvring his cherry stones, and throwing his enemy's representatives into such utter confusion, that already possessed of that victory in imagination, which in reality he lived

to gain, he concluded his process by swearing he would lay the French admiral's flag at his sovereign's feet; a promise which he actually pledged to his majesty in his closet, and faithfully and gloriously performed. P. 298.

"That he carried this projected manœuvre into operation, and that the effect of it was successively decisive, all the world knows. My friend, Sir Charles Douglas, captain of the fleet, confessed to me that he himself had been adverse to the experiment, and, in discussing with the admiral, had stated his objections; to these he got no other answer, but that, 'his counsel was not called for; he required obedience only, he did not want advice.' Sir Charles also told me, that whilst the project was in operation (the battle then raging), his own attention being occupied by the gallant defence made by the French *Glorieux* against the ships that were pouring their fire into her, upon his crying out—'Behold, Sir George, the Greeks and Trojans contending for the body of *Patroclus*!'—The admiral, then pacing the quarter deck in great agitation, pending the experiment of his manœuvre (which in the instance of one ship had unavoidably miscarried), peevishly exclaimed—'Damn the Greeks and damn the Trojans; I have other things to think of.' When, in a few minutes after, his supporting ship having led through the line in a gallant style, turning with a smile of joy to Sir Charles Douglas, he cried out—'Now, my dear friend, I am at the service of your Greeks and Trojans, and the whole of Homer's *Iliad*, or as much of it as you please, for the enemy is in confusion, and our victory is secure.'—This anecdote, correctly as I relate it, I had from that gallant officer, untimely lost to his country, whose candour scorned to rob his admiral of one leaf of his laurels, and who, disclaiming all share in the manœuvre, nay confessing he had objected to it, did, in the most pointed and decided terms, again and again repeat his honourable attestations of the courage and conduct of his commanding officer on that memorable day." P. 299.

HORRID VENGEANCE TAKEN BY AN HIGHLAND CHIEF.

THE following extraordinary example of the length to which the rage of a savage mind will drive the actions of men, is taken from the body of notes affixed to Sir Walter Scott's poem, the *Lord of the Isles*. The anecdote is given to illustrate the following lines:—

"A numerous race, ere stern Macleod
O'er their bleak shores in vengeance
strode,

When all in vain the ocean cave
Its refuge to his victims gave.
The chief, relentless in his wrath,
With blazing heath blockades the path;
In dense and stifling volumes roll'd,
The vapour fill'd the cavern'd hold!
The warrior threat, the infant's plain,
The mother's screams were heard in
vain;

The vengeful chief maintains his fires,
Till in the vault a tribe expires!
The bones which strew that cavern's
gloom,

Too well attest their dismal doom."

p. 140.

Sir Walter Scott, it appears, visited the place where this atrocity was perpetrated. He says, on the 26th August, 1814, we manned the boat, and rowed along the shore of Egg in quest of a cavern, which had been the memorable scene of a horrid feudal vengeance. This noted cave has a very narrow opening, through which one can hardly creep on his hands and knees. It rises steep and lofty within, and runs into the bowels of the rock to the depth of 255 feet. The rude and stoney bottom of the cave is strewed with the bones of men, women, and children, the sad reliques of the ancient inhabitants of the island, 200 in number, who were slain on the following occasion:—The Mac-Donalds of the isle of Egg, a people dependent on Clan-Ronald, had done some injury to the laird of Mac-Leod. To avenge the offence given, Mac-Leod sailed with such a body of men, as rendered resistance hopeless. The natives, fearing his vengeance, concealed themselves in this cavern, and, after a strict search, the Mac-Leods

went on board their galleys, after doing what mischief they could, concluding the inhabitants had left the isle, and betaken themselves to the Long Island, or some of Clan-Ronald's other possessions. But next morning they espied from the vessels a man upon the island, and immediately landing again, they traced his retreat by the marks of his footsteps, a light snow being unhappily on the ground. Mac-Leod then surrounded the cavern, summoned the subterranean garrison, and demanded that the individuals that had offended him should be delivered up to him. This was peremptorily refused. The chieftain then caused his people to divert the course of a rill of water, which, falling over the entrance of the cave, would have prevented his purposed vengeance. He then kindled at the entrance of the cavern a huge fire, composed of turf and fern, and maintained it with unrelenting assiduity, until all within were destroyed by suffocation. The date of this dreadful deed must have been recent, if one can judge from the fresh appearance of those reliques. I brought off, says Sir Walter Scott, in spite of the prejudice of our sailors, a skull from among the numerous specimens of mortality which the cavern afforded!

HERRINGS.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF HERRING,
AND OF THE SEVERAL METHODS
OF CURING THAT FISH.

THE herring is an aviparous fish, whose black-fin is wholly soft and flexible, having but one; it is scaly, without teeth, of a bright silver colour on the belly, and a shining colour on the back, presently dying when taken out of the water, having a row of sharp prickles under the belly, and is of the gregarious kind, that is, swim together in great shoals, sometimes, on the coast of Scotland, of a mile or more in length. The English proverb, As dead as a herring, arises from their dying as soon as taken out of the water. Because of its delicate taste, or

rather the great profit made thereof, the herring is called the king of fish.

Herrings are chiefly caught upon the coasts of Suffolk and Norfolk, near the towns of Yarmouth, Leostoffe, and Southwold; and the fittest time of the year for fishing, is thought to be from the middle of September to the middle of October. The fishermen conjecture where the shoal of herrings is, by the flying of great quantities of sea fowl over them; for these perpetually follow them, and observe their motions, in hopes to have some for their prey.

Herrings are distinguished into six sorts:—the first is called *Harengus Pinguis*, because they are large and fat; these continue three months; the second is called *Harengus Carnosus*, which is also large, very fleshy, but not so fat as the former; the third is the *Harengus Nocturnus* (the herring of the night), which is of a middle magnitude, and less fat and fleshy than either of the other two; the fourth is the *Harengus Ruptus* (called the pluck), which have some part of their bodies broken or damaged by being pulled from their entanglements in the nets; the fifth is the *Harengus Vacuus* (the shotten herring), which has cast its spawn, and is grown lank; the last is the *Harengus Acephalus* (a copshen), whose head, by pulling out of the net, or some other way, is pulled off. All these sorts they salt after this manner: they cast into a tub or vat that will hold a last, or at least half a last, as much salt as is sufficient. Afterwards they put in a measure of herrings, called a Swill, containing about 500, all at once; and being there, they turn them with a great stick continually, strewing salt as they are turned. After the same manner they repeat with the new herrings, turning and salting them till the vat be full.

The herrings put in the bottom, and salted, do presently become stiff; neither are they to be mixed in salting, with those that are above. After 16, or at most 24 hours, they take out the herrings, and put them into twig-baskets of such a texture, that when the fish are washed, they may

easily transmit the salt, scales, and other filth. Then taking out the herrings, they put them upon slender and long wooden spits, and hang them in the houses to be smoked, being laid upon wooden machines, or frames, fixed for that purpose in the upper part of the house, and hanging down from the roof so far, that a man may easily reach them. These spits laden with herrings, are put on wooden poles (called loves) being fixed in order at each end, in certain beams (called bawks), where they are left at about five fingers distance. The bawks are inserted in the side beams, so that more spits may be hung up, and they are done like so many floors, at about ten inches distance.

In the pavement underneath, are made fires of wood, cut into billets, which they kindle every quarter of an hour. Five hundred billets are sufficient for drying one last. By this method red herrings are perfected in the space of a month, for the sale at home; but for those that are designed for the Streights, or the Mediterranean, six weeks are required. But if the weather happen to be rainy, or windy, the herrings are dried more slowly, especially on that side towards the wind. Every where, as much as they can, they build these houses most free from wind, under the shelter of other houses, trees, heaps of earth, mountains, or hedges.

For the preserving or curing of herrings, as it is called, they use Spanish salt, as much fitter than any other. A barrel and a half of salt, suffices to salt one last. One barrel holds about 700 fat herrings, but, of other sorts, they fill a barrel with about 1000, more or less; and ten barrels make a last.

Sometimes the fishermen, when in mid-sea they have caught but a few fish, salt or cure them there; but they are much less esteemed than those pickled on shore, where they are more commodiously cured; although others say, the reason why Dutch pickled herrings are better than ours, is, because they cure them as soon as ever they are taken on board, out of the sea; whereas, ours being kept till

they are brought on shore, and so being staler, will not pickle so well.

The white or pickled herrings are called solstitial herrings, because they are taken about the summer solstice, being the larger and fatter. These having their gills and guts taken out, are cured with pickle or brine, whence they are called pickled herrings; these, the Dutch are more famed for than us. Three barrels of Spanish salt, more or less, are sufficient for salting one last of these. The French, and others, exercise the art of drying herrings in the sun, and so harden them. The time of the year being very fit for drying them, when they frequent the shores of Norfolk and Suffolk. They swim in shoals, and love to swim near shore. They bring forth once a year, which is about the autumnal equinox, or September, at which time, before they cast their spawn, they are best, and most valuable; as indeed are almost all other fish.

FRUITS AND ROOTS.

FRUITS and roots form a large class of the substitutes for bread. The latter, being produced under ground, are less liable to suffer from the inclemency of the season than grain. Men who wish to inflame the minds of the multitude may inveigh against the substitutes for bread; but reason and sound sense say, the more substitutes for bread, the better. When one fails, recourse can be had to another.

In warm climates the inhabitants have many substitutes for bread; and as their seasons are more uniform than ours, they can generally depend on the plant, or whatever it is, proving productive. The plantain tree, commonly called the Indian fig, which has from time immemorial been cultivated in South America, bears fruit of a sweetish taste, which will dissolve in the mouth without chewing. It is eaten either raw, fried, or roasted. When intended to supply the place of Bread, it is gathered before it is ripe, and eaten either boiled or roasted. The banana is nearly of the same nature, but its fruit is greatly superior both in taste and flavour.

The inhabitants of the South Sea, or Ladrone Islands, are supplied with bread from a tree, which has been lately imported into our West Indian islands, and will, it is hoped, be found to answer the same purpose there. It has a slight degree of sweetness, but not much flavour. It resembles new bread, and requires to be roasted before it is eaten. Those who have tasted it say, that it is in no respect superior to the potatoe.

In some of the West India islands the inhabitants supply the place of grain by making bread from the root of a shrub, called the cassada, or cassava. Though, to my taste, this bread is very insipid, yet the natives are fond of it, to such a degree, that I have known some of them eat it, during their residence in England, in preference to the finest London bread.

But the most general substitutes for bread in the West Indies are the yams. There are three different species of this plant, the roots of which are promiscuously used for bread. They are said to be very nutritious, of easy digestion, and, when properly dressed, are by some preferred to the best wheaten bread. The taste is somewhat like the potatoe, but more luscious. The negroes generally eat them boiled, and beaten into a mash. The white people have them ground into flour, and make bread and puddings of them. They can be preserved for several seasons, without losing any of their primitive goodness.

Of all the substitutes for bread in Europe, the potatoe is the most extensively useful. This plant is a native of Peru, and has been in Europe about two hundred years. Like most other important discoveries, it made but a slow progress, and is still far from being so generally cultivated as it deserves to be. It is indeed known in most parts of Europe, but its culture is best understood in Ireland and the northern parts of England. At Harwich, however, the preference is given to the Dutch potatoes, brought over by the packets between that place and Helveot Sluys. There is a light sandy soil in Holland, very

favourable to the culture of that inestimable root.—(Resumed on page 291.)

Interesting Varieties.

A HINT TO THE GREAT, ON MASQUERADES.

SUPPOSE two or three hundred carmen, watermen, and draymen, hackney-coachmen, and other such ruffian gentry, with a mixture of manly females, take it into their heads to meet upon a certain day together, to have a general rendezvous of mirth and pleasure, and spend a whole night, and part of a day together, to exhibit and shew themselves in the most grotesque and monstrous figures, producing no effect but the admiration and ridicule of the multitude. Would not those inferior low mortals, for their extravagancy and folly, come under the cognizance of justices of the peace, and be judged an unlawful mob, not a legal meeting, and without any just authority?

EXTRAORDINARY INSTANCE OF PRESENCE OF MIND.

A British serjeant was taken prisoner by the savages in America, who prepared themselves to put him to death with all the barbarity which their skill in torture could invent. Shocked with the view of the horrid sufferings which awaited him, he thus addressed the Indians:—"Mighty warriors! your preparations are vain, for my body is invulnerable; and if you set me at liberty, I will teach you how to become so. Think not that I impose upon you by false pretensions. I am willing that you should try upon me an experiment which may satisfy your doubts. Let the chief, who holds my hanger, now strike with all his force. I equally defy the sharpness of the instrument, and the strength of his arm." Whilst he was saying these words, he bent his head and laid bare his neck. The Indians eagerly advanced, and by one furious blow, severed the head from his body. Thus the poor serjeant, by his pre-

sence of mind, exchanged lingering tortures for an easy and instantaneous death.

USEFUL AND CURIOUS HINTS IN GARDENING.

The destruction of worms and insects by the use of salt, is an effectual preservative of the beauty of gravel walks. Where worms rise much in the morning, should the weather be dry, strew some salt over night.—When your trees or borders are out of crop, strew salt on them, to destroy the nests of insects, &c. Insects in old walls may be destroyed with salt brine and a syringe; or on the rough trunks of trees the same liquid may be employed with success, to destroy the eggs lodged therein in autumn, or larvæ in spring. It may also be tried in destroying caterpillars; though, in some cases, salt is to be preferred.

TO GROW PEACHES WITH INSCRIPTIONS ON THEM.—Take the stone of a good peach, and bury it for seven or eight days, till it be half open, then take the kernel out of the shell without breaking it, and with vermilion write what you please upon it; when the writing is dry, put it into the shell again, and bind it down with a thread, and the tree will bear such fruit.

TO GROW TULIPS, AND OTHER FLOWERS, OF ANY COLOUR.—Steep the seeds in ink to make them black, in verdigrease to make them green, in azure for a true violet.

ATMOSPHERICAL REFRACTION.

A SURPRISING instance of atmospheric refraction occurred at Hastings on the 26th of July, 1798. W. Latham, Esq. F. R. S. sitting in his dining room, situated on the parade, close to the sea shore, and nearly fronting the south, about five in the afternoon, had his attention suddenly drawn by a great number of people running down to the sea side. On enquiring the reason, he was informed that the coast of France was plainly to be distinguished with the naked

eye. On going down to the shore, he was surprised to find that, even without the assistance of a telescope, he could very plainly see the cliffs on the opposite coast; which, at the nearest part, are between forty and fifty miles distant, and are not to be discerned, from that low situation, by the aid of the best glasses. They appeared to be only a few miles off, and seemed to extend for some leagues along the coast. Pursuing his walk along the shore to the eastward, close to the water's edge, and conversing on the subject with the sailors and fishermen, they could not, at first, be persuaded of the reality of the appearance; but soon became so thoroughly convinced, by the cliffs gradually appearing more elevated, and approaching nearer, as it were, that they pointed out, and named to him the different places they had been accustomed to visit, such as, the Bay, the Old Head or Man, the Windmill, &c. at Boulogne; together with St. Vallery, and other places on the coast of Picardy. This they afterwards confirmed, when they viewed them, thus refracted, through their telescopes, observing that the above places appeared as near as if they had been sailing, at a small distance, into the harbours.

From the eastern cliff, which is of a very considerable height, a most beautiful scene presented itself to Mr. Latham's view, for there he could at once see Dungeness, Dover Cliffs, and the French coast, all along from Calais, Boulogne, &c. to St. Vallery; and, as some of the fishermen affirmed, as far to the westward even as Dieppe. By the telescope, the French fishing boats were plainly to be seen at anchor, and the different colours of the land on the heights, with the buildings, were perfectly discernable. This curious phenomenon continued in the highest splendour till half past eight o'clock, notwithstanding a black cloud for some time totally obscured the face of the sun, and then vanished gradually. So remarkable an instance of atmospherical refraction had not been before witnessed by the oldest inhabitant of Hastings. It was like-

wise observed at Winchelsea, and other places along the coast. The day was remarkably hot, without a breath of wind stirring.

THE AIR-BALLOON.

Among the many discoveries of modern philosophy, this is one of the most splendid: hitherto, however, it has not been attended by any corresponding utility, owing to the difficulty of steering the machine. The most promising attempts to overcome this difficulty were made by Zambecari, an Italian, whose aerial excursions are curiously detailed by Kotzebue, in his travels, and whose principles were truly scientific; but still this great desideratum remains to be attained.

The discovery of hydrogen gas, which is fifteen times lighter than atmospheric air, suggested the plan of filling with this gaseous substance a silken balloon, and of its ascent in the air, with an aeronaut appended to it, provided the whole should not exceed the weight of an equal bulk of atmospheric air. The process of filling the balloon is accomplished by mixing five parts of water with one of sulphuric acid, and pouring the mixture on iron filings: the light gas, by the decomposition of the water, will rise into the balloon; and the balloon being twelve times lighter than the atmospheric air, will rise through it. Thus have two, three, and even four, persons, been at one time carried through the atmosphere.

More than fifty aerial voyages, in different parts of Europe, have been made by Blanchard; nearly as many by Garnerin; and thirty by Mr. Sadler; to which may be added many others, with those of the present adventurer, Mr. Green.

The Wit's Nunchion.

STROLLING PLAYER.—A Ragotin, who had run away from his friends, got among a most low and miserable set of strolling players: a relation, after a time, discovered him, just as he was going on the stage in King

Richard, and, on reading him a pretty severe lecture on his folly and disobedience, received an answer suitable to all the ridiculous consequence and assumed pomp of a mock monarch. To which his friend answered, "These are fine lofty words, but it is a pity, Mr. King Richard, that you could not afford to buy a better pair of shoes!" The actor looking at his toes, which were staring him in the face, without losing his vivacity, cried out, "Shoes!—Oh, damme, shoes are things we kings don't stand upon!"

EPIGRAM.

On a certain great man's stopping up his windows against the commencement of the Window Act.

MOMUS propos'd to fix an open window
In each man's breast, to see what they
within do;

But all, O Niger! must prefer thy art,
Who stop your windows up—to shew
your heart.

EPITAPH

IN DENMORE CHURCH-YARD, IRELAND

Here lie the remains of John Hall, grocer.

The world is not worth a FIG, and I
have good REASONS for saying so.

A CURE FOR THE GOUT.—An Irish gentleman being confined to his bed by a very severe fit of the gout, the sweeps were employed to clean the chimnies of the house next to him, and one of the boys by mistake came down into the gentleman's apartment. The boy confused at his mistake, seeing the gentleman in bed, said, "Sir, master will come for you presently." "Will he by G—d!" said the gentleman, leaping out of bed; "I beg to be excused staying here any longer then," and immediately ran down stairs.

DEAN SWIFT preaching in a country church, a pack of cards slipped, as if

by accident, from one of the sleeves of his cassock; a great smile ensued, as it seemed to denote a propensity very ill according with his holy function; but a severe reproof to many parents of his congregation, soon followed. "Come here, my dears," said he to several children of the village, who had been found remarkably deficient in their catechism on the preceding Sunday; "come here, and gather up those cards. Well what's that?"—"The ace of clubs, sir."—"That's a good boy. Well, and the next?"—"The four of diamonds, sir."—"Still better; and you, my pretty little girl, what do you call your card?"—"The king of hearts, sir."—"What exactness!" said the father, "and so young too. Well now, my dears, let us hear your replies to the questions in the catechism again." He proceeded, but found their answers scarcely, if at all, better than on the preceding examination. "Thus it is," said he, "you give your children every facility in acquiring frivolous and useless knowledge, and neglect the care of their everlasting salvation."

EPIGRAM.

'I'll list for a soldier,' says Robin to Sue,

'To avoid these eternal disputes!—

'Aye, aye,' cries the termagant, 'do Robin, do!

I'll raise, the mean while, fresh recruits.'

EPIGRAM.

No wonder that science, and learning
profound,

In Oxford and Cambridge so greatly
abound;

When such numbers take thither a little
each day,

And we meet with so few who bring any
away.

TO PHILLIS.

PHILLIS, you little rosy rake,
That heart of yours I long to rifle;
Come, give it me, and do not make
So much ado about a trifle.

THE NIG-NAG;

OR,

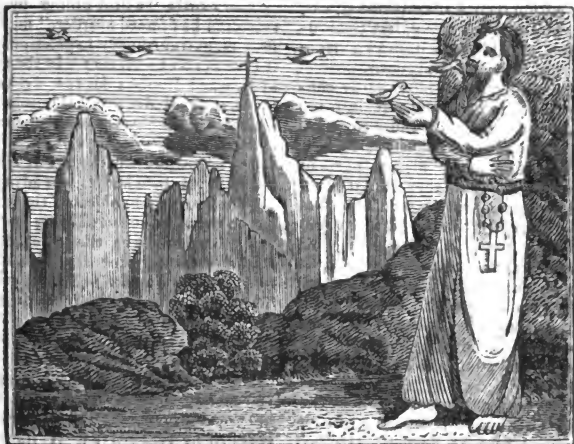
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 37.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 9, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



SPANISH BIRD-HERMIT, IN MONSERRAT HERMITAGE.

'Haste here, ye feather'd race of various song,
Bring all your pleasing melody along!
O come, ye tender, faithful, plaintive doves,
Perch on my hands, and sing your absent loves!'—

The mountain of Monserrat is situate in Catalonia, and has many hermitages dispersed about the higher parts.

Mr. Thicknesse, whose travels have afforded the public much entertainment and useful information, gives us the following account of a visit he paid to the Bird-Hermit, so called, because the feathered tribe are his constant associates.

The second hermitage, in the order they are usually visited, is that of St Catherine, situated in a deep and solitary vale: it, however, commands a most extensive and pleasing prospect at noon-day to the east and west.

The buildings, garden, &c. are confined within small limits, being fixed in a most picturesque and secure recess under the foot of one of the high pines. Though this hermit's habitation is the most retired and solitary abode of any, and far removed from the din of men, yet the courteous affable, and sprightly inhabitant, seems not to feel the loss of human society, though no man, I think, can be a greater ornament to human nature. If he is not much accustomed to hear the voice of men, he is amply recompensed by the mellifluous notes of birds; for it is their sanctuary as well as his; for no part of the mountain is so well inhabited by the feathered race of beings as this delightful spot. Perhaps, indeed, they have sagacity enough to know, that there is no other so perfectly secure. Here the nightingale, the black-bird, the linnet, and an infinite variety of little song-

sters, greater strangers to my eyes, than fearful of my hands, dwell in perfect security, and live in the most friendly intimacy with their holy protector, and obedient to his call.

These hermits are not allowed to keep within their walls either dog, cat, bird, or any living thing, lest their attention should be withdrawn from heavenly to earthly affections.

The youngest and most hardy constitutions are generally put into the higher hermitages, or those to which the access is most difficult; for the air is so fine in the highest parts of the mountain that, they say, it often renders the respiration painful. Nothing therefore can be more reasonable than that, as these good men grow older, and less able to bear the fatigues and inconveniences the highest abodes unavoidably subject them to, they should be removed to more convenient dwellings, and that the younger and stouter men should succeed them.

If there is a happy man upon this earth, I have seen that extraordinary man, and here he dwells! His features, his manners, all his looks and actions announce it; yet he had not even a single marevedi in his pocket. Money is as useless to him, as to one of his black-birds.

Within a gun-shot of this remnant of Eden, are the remains of an ancient hermitage, called St. Pedro. While I was there, my hermit followed me; but I too coveted retirement. I had just bought a fine fowling-piece at Barcelona; and when he came, I was availing myself of the hallowed spot, to make my vow never to use it. In truth, there are some sorts of pleasures too powerful for the body to bear, as well as some sorts of pain: and here I was racked upon the wheel of felicity; and could not say, like the poor criminal who suffered at Dijon, O God! O God! at every coup.

● ANCIENT PUNISHMENTS.

In statute 1, cap. 12, is the following passage:—"All wilful killing by poisoning of any person or persons that at any time hereafter shall be done,

perpetrated or committed, shall be adjudged, deemed, and taken, wilful murder of malice propensed; and the offenders, their aiders, &c., shall suffer death and forfeit as in other cases of wilful murder."

The words "wilful killing by poison shall be deemed murder," may appear an extraordinary expression, but it is thus accounted for:—In the reign of Edward I. when Horne wrote his "Mirrour of Justice," this mode of destroying people was only considered as man-slaughter; and it was first taken notice of by the act of the 22 Henry VIII. by which it was adjudged high treason, and subjected the criminal to the punishment of being BOILED TO DEATH, as was the case of one Richard Rice (some say Roose), a cook, who was boiled to death (probably in his own kettle), in Smithfield, for throwing poison into a pot of gruel, making for the Bishop of Rochester's family and the poor; and Margaret Davie, for poisoning three households that she lived in, suffered in the same manner. This statute was repealed by Edward VI., it therefore became necessary to provide a new penalty for the crime, and it was accordingly put on a footing with murder.

The idea that persons might be secretly destroyed by a mysterious and magical kind of slow poison, was the source of many cruel persecutions: but it was carried to great lengths in the reign of Elizabeth; for one Edward Squire was executed "for poisoning the pommel of the Queen's saddle, and the arms of the Earl of Essex's chair," thereby intending to destroy them; and which latter circumstance is particularly mentioned by Lord Walpole in his "Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors."

TRIAL BY BOILING WATER.

AMONG our ancestors, there was a way of proving crimes by immersing the body or arm in hot water, called Trial, or Purgation, by Boiling Water. In the judgment by boiling water, the accused, or he who personated the accused, was obliged to put his naked

arm into a cauldron of boiling water, and to draw out a stone there placed, at a greater or less depth, according to the quality of the crime. This done, the arm was wrapped up, and the judge set his seal on the cloth, and at the end of three days they returned to view it; when, if it were found without any scald, the accused was declared innocent. I. Mabillon will have this ceremony to have been introduced by Pope Eugenius II. in lieu of making oath with the hand laid on the relict of some saint; which having been abused, was prohibited by Innocent III. at the council of Lateran. F. Daniels, in his History of France, relates the following account of Theotberge, wife of Lothiae of France;—Having been accused of incest, committed before marriage, with her brother, Duke Hubert, as she could not be convicted by any witnesses, certain of the bishops were consulted as to the manner in which the judges should proceed in an affair where the crime, though dubious, did dishonour to the king. The bishops were of opinion that they should have recourse to the proof by boiling water, which consisted in this—the accused, to prove her innocence, should plunge her hand into a basin of boiling water, and take out a ring put therein. Sometimes they substituted a person to make the trial in the room of the accused; accordingly the rank and quality of Theotberge excusing her from making the trial herself, she chose a man to do it for her, who, either out of zeal for the life and honour of the princess, or for money, stood the test, and drew out his hand and the ring without harm.

FRUITS AND ROOTS.

(Concluded from page 286.)

As this plant thrives in every soil, and seldom suffers from the inclemency of seasons, we must blame ourselves if we suffer a famine to exist. Indeed, no such thing ever can be, where due attention is paid to the culture of potatoes. A far greater quantity of farinaceous food can be raised on an acre of ground planted with potatoes,

than sown with any kind of grain. It is not uncommon to have a return of forty for one. They are not so hearty a food as corn, but no man will ever perish for hunger who can have potatoes.

Potatoes abound with an insipid juice, which induces some to think that they are not very nutritious. Facts, however, are against this opinion. Some of the stoutest men we know, are brought up on milk and potatoes. Dr. Pearson, who has bestowed some pains in analyzing this root, says, that potatoes and water alone, with common salt, can nourish men completely. They differ in colour and consistence, but not materially with regard to their nutritive qualities.

Some think the firm kind are most nutritious; but the Irish, who must be good judges, give the preference to the mealy. The difference, however, depends much on the mode of cooking them.

More than half the substance of potatoes consists of water, and experience shews, that the mode of cooking, which most diminishes their moisture, is to be preferred. In London, they are drenched in water and washed before they are brought to market, which accounts in a great measure, for the bad quality of the London potatoes.

They are dressed in a variety of ways, but simple boiling or roasting seems to be all the cooking they require, to render them a proper substitute for bread. Some are fond of making bread of them. This, in my opinion, is marrying both. Why manufacture any thing into bread, which requires only the aid of fire to make it such? Nobody thinks of making dough of the bread fruit; but the potatoe might with as great propriety be called the bread root, as it is made into bread by the same process.

Stewed mutton and potatoes make not only a nourishing but a very palatable dish. The excess of fat of the mutton which, when otherwise cooked, sustains great loss, is thus preserved, by being absorbed by the potatoes. It is, however, to be ob-

served, that, when potatoes are used in broth or stews, they ought previously to be boiled, and the water thrown away, as it contains something deleterious. Simple boiling or roasting is sufficient to prepare potatoes to supply the place of bread, but when they are intended to serve as a meal, they require something of a softening nature, as milk, butter, or both. What a treasure is a milch cow and a potatoe-garden, to a poor man with a large family, who lives in the country! Yet, with a little attention from landlords and farmers, almost every man might be so accommodated. What a source of real wealth and population! Men would multiply, and poverty, unless amongst the profligate, be unknown. Horses are sometimes fed with potatoes, and become very fond of them. With the addition of a small quantity of hay, they are found to be sufficiently nourishing.

I would beg leave to recommend, both to landlords and farmers, a careful perusal of Earl Winchelsea's excellent letter to Sir John Sinclair, on the advantages of cottager's renting lands. This humane nobleman takes up the matter in a truly patriotic light, and shews that farmers, instead of lessening the number of poor, do every thing they can to multiply them; and I am sorry to say that, so far as my observation goes, it agrees entirely with his lordship's.

Another letter relating to this subject has lately fallen into my hands, a copy of which I shall take the liberty to insert, as it contains in a few paragraphs the best practical illustration of the truths I have long been endeavouring to enforce. It was written by Sir George Methuen Poore to Sir William Pulteney; and is dated

“Rushall, 4th April, 1801.

“Sir,—I can prove, not by theory, but practice, the benefit of planting potatoes on fallows. In the parish where I reside, the whole of which, except five acres, is my property, there are thirty cottages, containing one hundred and thirty-one poor people. I have, for five or six years past, allotted, free from rent, four acres of

land, intended to be sown with wheat the following autumn, for the cottagers to plant with potatoes, by which means each raises from ten to fifteen sacks, equal to two hundred and forty pounds per sack, yearly, in proportion to the number of their children: each has not only sufficient for his family, but is enabled also to fat a pig. They declare, were I to give among them a hundred pounds, it would not be of so much benefit to them; and it is not one shilling out of my pocket, for I have as good, if not a better crop of wheat from this land, as I have from the other part of the field.

“The method I take is this:—the latter end of November I plough the land; the frost during the winter mellows it: the beginning of March following, I plough it again, and harrow it; at both which times I have little to do with my horses: I then divide it into lots; a man with a large family has a larger lot than a single person, or one that has only two or three children, allowing about five perches (of 16½ feet square) to each in a family: they then plant it, and put over their potatoes what manure they have collected the year preceding (for every cottager has more manure than necessary for this, from their fires, and a variety of other things), and during the summer, after their day's labour is done, they and their wives hoe them; and as every man works more cheerfully for himself than another, they do not suffer a weed to grow. In October they dig them up; and it is the most pleasant thing imaginable to see the men, their wives, and children, gathering the produce of their little farms, which is to serve the ensuing winter.—Were this plan generally adopted, the labourers would consume but little corn; which would supply the manufacturing towns, and we should have no occasion to import. As four acres are sufficient for 30 families, it would take but a small quantity of land from every farm in the kingdom. The way practised here is to plant the potatoes in furrows, eighteen inches apart, and a foot apart in the rows. The land about me is of different qualities; on the hills ra-

ther light; in the vale, near the parish, inclining to clay; but all fit for turnips: the potatoes are planted in the low land, being nearer home. The poor at present will not live entirely without bread, as many do in Ireland, though potatoes daily get into use more and more; and I am persuaded, were my plan generally adopted, in two or three years the labourers in the country would consume but little or no corn. Thirty years ago, the poor in this part of the country would not eat potatoes if they could get other roots or vegetables."

It is unnecessary to make any comments on this letter, every line of which is dictated by good sense and humanity, as well as by liberal and enlightened policy. I shall only add an earnest wish, that the example of the truly patriotic and benevolent writer may be followed by every man of landed property, and by every considerable farmer in the kingdom!

Some think that the potatoe, unless it be made into bread, will not keep. An accident taught me the contrary. Many years ago a friend of mine sent me a potatoe, after it had been roasted in an oven, on account of its singular figure. I laid it on a shelf among some other things of the like kind, and was surprised, on removing them many years after, to find the potatoe quite fresh, though as dry as a bone. On grating it down, it was perfectly sweet; and as fit for making soup, as the day it was roasted. I apprehend that nothing made into bread would have kept so long.

Posterity will hardly believe that a scarcity of bread could be felt in Britain, at a time when it was known that a sufficient quantity of farinaceous food could be raised in one county for the inhabitants of the whole island. Let proper encouragement be given to the culture of potatoes, and set famine at defiance.

Many other domestic roots, sprouts, &c. are very wholesome, and may occasionally supply the place of bread. It is worthy of remark, that no nation can be very populous, which does not draw a great part of its food from under ground.

The Jerusalem artichoke is a native of Brazil, but, having been long cultivated in this country, it is too well known to need any description. From its taste, which is like that of artichoke bottoms, it would seem to be nutritious, and is far from being unpleasant to the palate. Some reckon it windy, but this may be corrected in the cooking, by warm spices; and as the plant is very productive, we would recommend it to be used in the same manner as potatoes, and other farinaceous roots.

SIR BERTRAND.

A FRAGMENT.

—— Sir Bertrand turned his steed towards the wolds, hoping to cross these dreary moors before the curfew. But ere he had proceeded half his journey, he was bewildered by the different tracks; and not being able, as far as the eye could reach, to espy any object but the brown heath surrounding him, he was at length quite uncertain which way he should direct his course. Night overtook him in this situation. It was one of those nights when the moon gives a faint glimmering of light through the thick black clouds of a lowering sky. Now and then she suddenly emerged in full splendour from her veil; and then instantly retired behind it, having just served to give the forlorn Sir Bertrand a wide extended prospect over the desolate waste. Hope and native courage awhile urged him to push forwards, but at length the increasing darkness and fatigue of body and mind overcame him; he dreaded moving from the ground he stood on, for fear of unknown pits and bogs, and alighting from his horse in despair, he threw himself on the ground. He had not long continued in that posture, when the sullen toll of a distant bell struck his ears—he started up, and turning towards the sound, discerned a dim twinkling light. Instantly he seized his horse's bridle, and with cautious steps advanced towards it. After a painful march he was stopped by a moated ditch surrounding the place from whence the

light proceeded; and, by a momentary glimpse of moon-light, he had a full view of a large antique mansion, with turrets at the corners, and an ample porch in the centre. The injuries of time were strongly marked on every thing about it. The roof in various places was fallen in, the battlements were half demolished, and the windows broken and dismantled. A draw-bridge, with a ruinous gate-way at each end, led to the court before the building.—He entered, and instantly the light, which proceeded from a window in one of the turrets, glided along and vanished; at the same moment the moon sunk beneath a black cloud, and the night was darker than ever. All was silent—Sir Bertrand fastened his steed under a shed, and, approaching the house, traversed its whole front with light and slow footsteps—All was still as death—He looked in at the lower windows, but could not distinguish a single object through the impenetrable gloom. After a short parley with himself, he entered the porch, and seizing a massy iron knocker at the gate, lifted it up, and hesitating, at length struck a loud stroke.—The noise resounded through the whole mansion with hollow echoes. All was still again—He repeated the strokes more boldly and louder—another interval of silence ensued—A third time he knocked, and a third time all was still. He then fell back to some distance, that he might discern whether any light could be seen in the whole front—It again appeared in the same place and quickly glided away, as before—at the same instant a deep sullen toll sounded from the turret. Sir Bertrand's heart made a fearful stop—He was awhile motionless; then terror impelled him to make some hasty steps towards his steed—but shame stopt his flight; and urged by honour, and a resistless desire of finishing the adventure, he returned to the porch; and working up his soul to a full steadiness of resolution, he drew forth his sword with one hand, and with the other lifted up the latch of the gate. The heavy door, creaking upon its hinges, reluctantly yielded to his hand—he applied his

shoulder to it and forced it open—he quitted it and stepped forward—the door instantly shut with a thundering clap.

Sir Bertrand's blood was chilled—he turned back to find the door, and it was long ere his trembling hands could seize it—but his utmost strength could not open it again. After several ineffectual attempts, he looked behind him, and beheld, across a hall, upon a large staircase, a pale bluish flame, which cast a dismal gleam of light around. He again summoned forth his courage and advanced towards it—it retired. He came to the foot of the stairs, and after a moment's deliberation ascended. He went slowly up, the flame retiring before him, till he came to a wide gallery.—The flame proceeded along it, and he followed in silent horror, treading lightly, for the echoes of his footsteps startled him. It led him to the foot of another staircase, and then vanished.—At the same instant another toll sounded from the turret.—Sir Bertrand felt it strike upon his heart. He was now in total darkness, and with his arms extended, began to ascend the second staircase. A dead cold hand met his left hand, and firmly grasped it, drawing him forcibly forwards—he endeavoured to disengage himself, but could not—he made a furious blow with his sword, and instantly a loud shriek pierced his ears, and the dead hand was left powerless in his.—He dropt it, and rushed forwards with a desperate valour. The stairs were narrow and winding, and interrupted by frequent breaches, and loose fragments of stone. The staircase grew narrower and narrower, and at length terminated in a low iron grate. Sir Bertrand pushed it open—it led to an intricate winding passage, just large enough to admit a person upon his hands and knees. A faint glimmering of light served to shew the nature of the place. Sir Bertrand entered.—A deep hollow groan resounded from a distance through the vault.—He went forwards, and proceeding beyond the first turning, he perceived the same blue flame which had before conducted him.—He fol-

lowed it. The vault, at length, suddenly opened into a lofty gallery, in the midst of which a figure appeared, completely armed, thrusting forwards the bloody stump of an arm, with a terrible frown and menacing gesture, and brandishing a sword in his hand. Sir Bertram undauntedly sprung forwards; and aiming a fierce blow at the figure, it instantly vanished, letting fall a massy iron key. The flame now rested upon a pair of ample folding doors at the end of the gallery. Sir Bertrand went up to it, and applied the key to a brazen lock—with difficulty he turned the bolt—instantly the doors flew open, and discovered a large apartment, at the end of which was a coffin rested upon a bier, with a taper burning on each side of it. Along the room on both sides were gigantic statues of black marble, attired in the Moorish habit, and holding enormous sabres in their right hands. Each of them reared his arm, and advanced one leg forwards, as the knight entered; at the same moment the lid of the coffin flew open, and the bell tolled. The flame still glided forwards, and Sir Bertrand resolutely followed, till he arrived within six paces of the coffin. Suddenly, a lady in a shroud and black veil rose up in it, and stretched out her arms towards him—at the same time the statues clashed their sabres and advanced. Sir Bertrand flew to the lady, and clasped her in his arms—she threw up her veil and kissed his lips; and instantly the whole building shook as with an earthquake, and fell asunder with a horrible crash. Sir Bertrand was thrown into a sudden trance, and on recovering, found himself seated on a velvet sofa, in the most magnificent room he had ever seen, lighted with innumerable tapers, in lustres of pure crystal. A sumptuous banquet was set in the middle. The doors opening to soft music, a lady of incomparable beauty, attired with amazing splendour entered, surrounded by a troop of gay nymphs more fair than the Graces.—She advanced to the knight and falling on her knees thanked him as her deliverer. The nymphs placed a garland of laurel upon his head, and

the lady led him by the hand to the banquet, and sat beside him. The nymphs placed themselves at the table, and a numerous train of servants entering, served up the feast; delicious music playing all the time. Sir Bertrand could not speak for astonishment—he could only return their honors by courteous looks and gestures. After the banquet was finished, all retired but the lady, who leading back the knight to the sofa, addressed him in these words: * * * * *

AIKIN'S MISCEL.

Interesting Varieties.

RATES OF POSTAGE.

FROM any Post-Office in great Britain, to any place not exceeding 15 miles from such Office, 4d.

From any Post-Office to any place above 15 and not exceeding 20 m. 4d.

From any Post-Office to any place above 20 and not exceeding 30 m. 6d.

From any Post-Office to any place above 30 and not exceeding 50 m. 7d.
Ditto, 50 and not more than 80, 8d.

Ditto, 80 and not more than 120, 9d.

From any Post-Office to any place above 120 and not more than 170 miles, 10d.

Ditto, 170 to 230, 11d.

Ditto, 230 to 300, 12d.

Ditto, every 100 miles beyond 300, 1d.

All double, treble, and other letters and packets whatever (except by the Two-Penny-Post) pay in proportion to the respective rates of single letters; but no letter or packet to and from places within the kingdom of Great Britain, together with the contents thereof, shall be charged more than as a treble letter, unless the same shall weigh an ounce, when it is to be rated as four single letters, and so in proportion for every quarter of an ounce above that weight, reckoning each quarter as a single letter. Letters to soldiers and sailors, if single, and in conformity to the Act of Parliament, are chargeable with one penny only.

Letters and Packets from any part of Great Britain or Ireland, for any of the places under the Title, **FOREIGN LETTERS**, are, besides the foreign rates and packet postage to pay, at the Office where they are put in, the full postage to London, without which they cannot be forwarded; therefore, All persons are to take particular notice thereof, to prevent the necessity of their Letters being opened and returned for the postage.

ORIGIN OF THE THREE BLUE BALLS, AT PAWNBROKERS.

The three blue balls prefixed to the doors and windows of pawnbrokers' shops, by the vulgar humorously enough said to indicate that it is two to one that the things pledged are ever redeemed, was in reality the arms of a set of merchants from Lombardy, who were the first that publicly lent money on pledges. They dwelt together in a street, from them named Lombard Street, in London, and also gave their name to another at Paris. The appellation of Lombard was formerly all over Europe considered as synonymous to that of usurer.

The Wit's Nunchion.

ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORD EVE.—

The Jewish doctors have a fable concerning the etymology of the word **Eve**; which one would almost be tempted to say is realized in the French women. "Eve," say they, "comes from a word that signifies to talk; and she was so called because, soon after the creation, there fell from heaven twelve baskets of chit-cat, and she picked up NINE of them while her husband was gathering the other three!"

A COUNTRYMAN being a witness in a court of justice, was asked by the counsel, if he was born in **WEDLOCK**? "No, sir," answered the man, "I was born in Northamptonshire!"

A GENTLEMAN advertised for a clerk who could bear confinement, and who had been some years in his last place. He was answered by a person who had been a number of years in Newgate!

SAD NEWS.—"What news in the great world?" asked a country parson, of a gentleman who had just left the metropolis.—"An event, sir," answered he, "recently took place, which, from its aspect, threatened to affect every body in a manner, that if persisted in for any length of time, must have unavoidably produced the destruction of the whole town."—"Pray, sir, what do you allude to?" said the parson, with alarm.—"A GENERAL FAST! sir," replied the other.

MARGARET OF AUSTRIA, when nearly perishing in a storm at sea, composed her epitaph, which runs thus:

Beneath this tomb the gentle Margaret's laid,
Who had two husbands, and yet died a maid.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We hope CAROLUS will perceive that part of his hints are attended to in the present No.—that we received them with some conviction we readily acknowledge, though, at the same time, we feel it incumbent on us in maintaining that some of them are mistaken notions, for the matter which he asserts as being uninteresting to youth we consider the best part of our work, and such as youth, as he ripens into maturity, will undoubtedly preserve with delight and approbation, for the oftener he falls into rational conversation the more will he value the possession of the Nic-Nac.

D's "Power of Love," and E. Y., Ignite, and W. P's Rhymes, are received, and they now lie for inspection at the Court of Parnassus, but as the council has adjourned for a week or two, we feel it our duty to solicit the indulgence of our Correspondents to a further delay of their answers.—A number of Prosaic Communications are also neglected from the same cause.

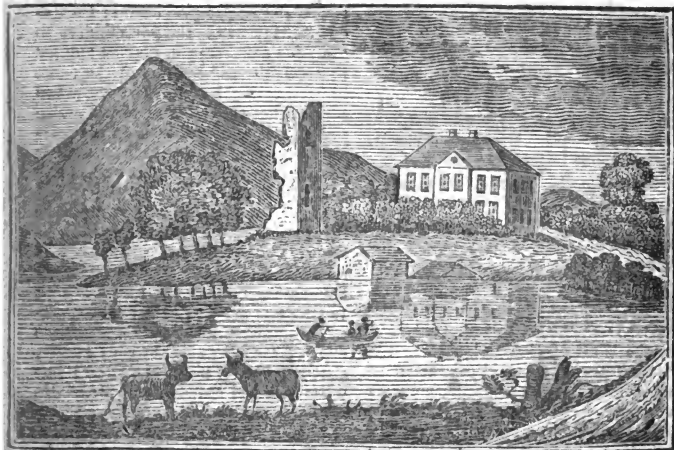
THE NIC-NAG; OR, ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 38.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 16, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it" — SHAKESPEARE.



SIR J. COLQUHOUN'S SEAT, AT LUSS.

LUSS is situated in the county of Lenox, or Dunbarton, in the south of Scotland, and belonging to the West Highlands. Its chief beauty is derived from Loch-Lomond, on whose picturesque bank it stands. This celebrated lake, the most extensive in Great Britain, is twenty-four miles long, and in some places six or seven broad; containing about thirty of the most delightful little islands imaginable, in three of which are churches, but some of the others are uninhabited: at its head Ben-Lomond rises majestically, three thousand two hundred and forty feet above the surface of the water. Plantations, villas, and other rich and diversified objects, give a most beautiful and striking effect to the view in every direction. Diddin, on a visit to this delightful spot, says, he was thunder-struck; and had he not taken its effect on paper,

it never would have gone out of his mind. It was a hazy noon, of that particular kind which brings objects more into view, and gives them their own appropriate tint to greater perfection than a clearer atmosphere; a doctrine which I could never believe till I was taught it at Deal, where, when the day has been bright and free from vapour, they wait till the evening's mists begin to arise before they can plainly see the coast of France; and then, not only the shapes of the cliffs, but the chalky hue of their faces are easily discernable.

Being full summer he was delighted with alternate views of the industry of nature and the industry of art. Infinite objects of fertility manifested one, and hundreds of labourers and artificers in the print fields and iron works, the other; all seeming to court the approbation of the smiling Leven,

which glided on in that placid majesty Smollet so well describes in a beautiful little poem called "An Ode to Leven-Water," the concluding stanzas of which we transcribe.

"Devolving from thy parent lake,
A charming maze thy waters make,
By bow'rs of birch, and groves of pine,
And hedges flower'd with eglantine.

Still on thy banks, so gaily green,
May num'rous herds and flocks be seen;
And lasses chaunting o'er the pail,
And shepherds piping in the dale;
And ancient faith, that knows no guile;
And industry, embrown'd with toil;
And hearts resolv'd, and hands prepar'd,
The blessings they enjoy to guard!"

Here Smollet first drew his existence; and at the entrance to Renton is a beautiful column to his memory, which being partly hid among the trees has a very sweet effect.

THE STORY OF JANE GILBERT, A SUPPOSED WITCH.

In the West of England, during the last century, there lived (about forty miles from Exeter) a poor industrious woman, who laboured under the evil report of being an old witch. Every hog that died of the murrain, every cow that slipped her calf, and all such casual accidents, were attributed to some pranks of Goody Jane Gilbert. If a horse had the staggers, she was supposed to be in his head; nay, whenever the wind blew a little stronger than ordinary, Goody Gilbert was declared to be playing her tricks, and riding on a broom-stick in the air.

These and a thousand other phantasms, too ridiculous to recite, possessed the pates of the common people, and of many a would-be; and ingenuity was all alive to entrap and mortify the poor old creature. Such indeed was the rage against her, that they even petitioned Mr. Williams, the parson of the parish, not to let her come to church; nay, at last, even insisted upon it. This, however, he overruled, and appropriated a nook in one of the aisles to herself, where she muttered over her prayers with as much devotion, apparently at least, as any of the congregation.

The parish, thus discontented and enraged, withdrew the small pittance they had been accustomed to allow her for her support, and would have reduced her to starvation, had she not been assisted frequently by the benevolent Mr. Williams, who would kindly go and procure her some spinning work from the next market town, and was so provoked at the uncivil behaviour of the parishioners to the poor old creature, that he applied to a neighbouring justice of the peace in her behalf; but as there happened a storm the night before, which stripped a good deal of thatch off his worship's stables, that wise haberdasher of the law positively refused her any sort of relief.

One afternoon, while a party were drinking tea with Mr. and Mrs. Williams, a message was brought that poor old Goody Gilbert was taken extremely ill, and they therefore all went together to see her. As they expected to find her in bed, they opened the door of her miserable hut very gently, that they might not disturb her; but when they had entered, poor Jane was spinning by a small turf fire, which might be covered with a plate.

As the poor old soul was deaf, she did not hear them open the door, therefore they had an opportunity of taking a full survey of her and her place of abode, before she perceived them, and such a picture of wretchedness is seldom to be found. Her body half naked, insomuch that her withered breasts and skin appeared through many parts of her tattered garments. Her head was bound round with an old ragged blue stocking, that exposed her bald crown and her ears to view. Her hose were composed of two haybands, tied round her legs with rope-yarn.

She sat in an old rickety elbow chair, and by fits dozed, and then again turned her wheel, to the motion of which her under jaw kept exact time.

When Mr. Williams called aloud to her, she raised herself up, and by the support of her chair, made the best curtsy her poor feeble limbs would admit.

The manner of their coming in had a little confused her, but they begged her to be composed, and she soon recovered herself, and by their desire resumed her seat. Mr. Williams then enquired into the nature of her disorder, when she told him that she believed her illness was principally occasioned by her eating that food, pointing to an earthen pan that stood before them, composed of a little barley meal, salt, and water; adding that she seldom tasted a bit of meat, or even bread, for the last seven or eight days.

At this Mr. Williams expressed surprise, and asked what had become of the victuals he had sent her the beginning of the week? After thanking him very kindly, she replied, that two fellows in the neighbourhood, whose names she mentioned, had taken it from her, and that one of them had struck her several blows. Mr. Williams was rather angry that she had not informed him of it; but she desired he would not be displeased, adding, that she was loath to be too troublesome.

Mrs. Williams, who was a worthy good-hearted lady, was greatly affected at this circumstance, and shed tears, as did also each of the party. Mrs. Williams warned some sack whey which she had brought in her pocket, and gave it to the poor creature to drink, which she eagerly swallowed, and was so cherished by it, that she talked to them tolerably cheerfully for two hours and upwards, and entertained them with her whole history, and the history of her time, which was frequently interrupted with the warmest expressions of gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. Williams.

When they expressed their surprise at her memory and good sense, she told them that she was once a gentlewoman's waiting maid, with whom she had a good education, and could even now read and write very well, if her health would permit, but that her neighbours would not suffer her to have a pen and ink, and that they had stolen her bible and spectacles.

Just as they were coming away, one of them put two half crown pieces in-

to her hand, which she begged leave to return again, saying she should prefer a few halfpence in their stead; for the people, says she, in the neighbourhood are possessed with a notion that I can turn lead into silver and gold, but that soon afterwards it will become lead again, and therefore none of the shops will change any money for me.

When they parted with the poor old creature she cried a good deal, and whispered to Mr. Williams to come again, and give her the sacrament, for that she did not think she should live long.

Many other circumstances might be related of Jane Gilbert's behaviour, greatly to her credit, all of which proved she was not a witch, but a pious good Christian, unless witchcraft can be supposed to consist of wisdom, morality, and religion.—But now for the sequel of the story, in which you will find that the source from which witchcraft is reputed to spring, is poverty, age, and ignorance, and that it is impossible for a person to pass for a witch, unless she is very poor, and lives in a neighbourhood where people are void of common sense.

Some time after this interview a brother of Jane's died in London, who, though like a truly adopted son of care, would not part with a shilling while he lived, but at his death was obliged to leave her FIVE THOUSAND POUNDS, a large sum in those days. This getting known in her neighbourhood, immediately altered the face of Jane's affairs: she was no longer Jane Gilbert the ugly old witch, but Madam Gilbert, as she necessarily threw off her old tattered garments, and dressed comfortably and respectably. Her greatest enemies made their court to her, even the justice himself came to wish her joy; and though several hogs and horses died, and the winds blew roughly afterwards, Madam Gilbert was never supposed to have any hand in it.

From hence it is plain, as before observed, that none but a woman who is very old and wretchedly poor, and lives in a neighbourhood where the

people are very ignorant, can pass for a witch.

It was a saying of Mr. Williams, who would sometimes be very jocose, and had the art of making even satire agreeable, that if ever Jane deserved the epithet of a witch, it was after the money had been left her; for that with her five thousand pounds, she did more acts of charity and friendly offices, than any of the people of fortune within fifty miles of the place. Many hundreds knew this to be true, but as many who may hereafter read of it, may have some doubts of it, they are informed she gave bibles and common prayer books to numbers in the neighbourhood, even to her ignorant enemies, who before could only style her the ugly old witch; and she likewise paid for the schooling of forty boys and girls.

She boiled a large copper twice a week, and made dumplings for all the neighbours, who were old or ill. She lent five hundred pounds in small sums to poor tradesmen and small farms, without interest, for a certain period, and appointed trustees to take the best security they could, so that the principal might not be lost, and to remove the sums occasionally from one family to another, when the one could spare it, and another stood in need of it.

She settled twenty five pounds a year on the parson of the parish, to visit and pray by them, and teach the children their catechism; and to each child that came to church to repeat their catechism, she ordered a plum cake every Sunday.

Amongst her donations she did not forget her good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Williams, and gave their son and daughter five hundred pounds each, in her life time.

As to her own part, she allowed herself but twenty pounds a year to live on, which, at her death, she bequeathed to an old woman who attended her.

And this is a woman who, while very poor and ragged, her neighbours were about to destroy for witchcraft and sorcery! But the people being now ashamed of their former beha-

viour towards her, the name of the place is concealed.

ECONOMICAL BREWING.

SIR,—Meeting with the following paragraph in the Carlisle Paper, of August 2, I feel the greatest pleasure in transcribing it for your use. The process of brewing, there explained, is so economical and easily to be practised, that I hope it will have salutary effect upon your readers; indeed, those who have read that excellent article on Porter, in p. 148 of the Nic-Nac, will, no doubt, be glad enough to know that they can so easily obtain a wholesome and cheap beverage.

ECONOMIST.

THE art of brewing is very easy to be understood, for it is exactly similar to the process of making tea. Put a handful of malt into a tea-pot; then fill it up with water, the first time rather under boiling heat. After it has stood for some time, pour off the liquor, just as you would tea, and fill up the pot with boiling water; in a similar manner pour that off, and go on filling up and pouring off till the malt in the pot is tasteless, which will be the case when all the virtue is extracted. The liquor, or malt-tea thus extracted, must then be boiled with a few hops in it, and when it becomes cool enough, that is, about blood heat, add a little yeast to ferment it, and the thing is done. This is the whole art and process of brewing, and to brew a larger quantity requires just the same mode of proceeding as it would to make a tea breakfast for a regiment of soldiers. A peck of malt and four ounces of hops will produce ten quarts of ale, better than any that can be purchased in London, and for which purpose a tea-kettle and two pan mugs are sufficient apparatus. A bushel of malt to one pound of hops, which will not cost above nine shillings, that is sixpence a gallon, or three halfpence a quart. Brewing utensils, consisting of a mashing tub and oar, a sieve, two coolers, and wicker hose, a spigot and faucet, together with a couple of nine-gallon barrels, new from the

coopers, cost me no more than 36 shillings, and with these utensils I have frequently brewed, at one time, four bushels of malt. The plan I have adopted is, from one bushel of malt to extract nine gallons of liquor, for ale, and afterwards nine gallons more for table beer, both of which will be excellent.

WITCHERY & SLOW-POISON.

PRINCE HENRY was suspected to have died of poison, in consequence of wearing a pair of gloves which were made him a present of, and charmed with poisonous perfume.

Lord Bacon gravely asserts, that "impoisonment of particular persons by odours hath been reported to be in perfumed gloves or the like; plagues have also been raised by anointing the chinks of doors—not so much by the touch as for that it is common of men, when they find any thing wet upon their fingers, to put it to their noses." This is apt to make us think very seriously on the subject, or rank his lordship amongst the proselytes of his day to the doctrines of improbability.

James I's faith in necromancy was carried to the highest pitch of absurdity:—He published many edicts against "Prophets, sorcerors, feeders of evil spirits, charmers, and provokers to unlawfull love." The punishments of the flames for sorcery and witchcraft were not discontinued until the 9th Geo. II. passed for that purpose. It is no less extraordinary than true, that the great Judge Hale was a faithful believer in the Black Art, and consequently the terror of all the old women in the country; for if any were convicted before him of witchcraft, he made a conflagration of them without mercy. There is a very curious and singular tale related of this judge:—Being out with a shooting party, when a scholar at Oxford, they called at a cottage for refreshment, and not having money sufficient to reward the old woman for her hospitality, young Hale, on hearing she was subject to dreadful ague fits, gave her a piece of paper curiously folded up, and on which he had written a Latin verse,

as an effectual charm for her disorder. It happened that one of this family was tried before him, on the Oxford circuit, for witchcraft. On being called upon for her defence, she produced the identical charm which had led her ignorant neighbours to suspect her of being concerned with the devil. His confusion and astonishment may easily be conceived. The woman was acquitted, and it is said, that he ever after lamented the infatuation which had caused him to sacrifice so many innocent victims at the altar of his unaccountable credulity. The story is extracted from the MS. of a professional friend; but I think something to the same purport may be found in a collection of anecdotes made by D'Israel.

The following paragraph is copied from a scarce book, dated 1690, and written by J. Selden, Esq.

"The law against witches does not prove there be any; but it punishes the malice of those people who use such means to take away men's lives. If one should profess that, by turning his hat thrice, and crying—Buz, he could take away a man's life (though, in truth, he could do no such thing), yet this was a just law, that whosoever should turn his hat thrice and cry Buz, with an intention to take away a man's life, shall be put to death." †

Interesting Varieties.

SINGULARITIES OF THE PRODUCT OF THE SOIL, &c.

THERE are certain lands, on which, if you sow broad red clover and feed it off with sheep, do what you will, it will never place an ounce of fat on a sheep's bones, and yet on other lands, the same grass will fat them kindly.

Another fact is this; there are some lands which, if sown with either grey or white peas, will turn out according to their known character, a boiling crop, or a non-boiling crop, whatever the seed sown on them may be.

If the land is boiling land, and non-boiling white or grey peas are sown, the product will invariably be boilers;

if the land is a non-boiling land, no boiling pea that is sown, will produce a boiling crop.

There are certain vicissitudes of heat, when animals require very little nourishment; there are also certain vicissitudes of cold, which seem, from their effects, to lock up the appetite, as it were, and to subjugate the nature of the animal to the casualties of the seasons.

An ox will thrive almost on sunshine and water, in hot weather: a poor Mendip wether sheep will support himself alive for a fortnight, completely covered and buried under snow in the winter, provided the snow is drifted against a stone wall, the common defence of the Mendip hills; and that he stands upright while the snow is falling; if he lies down at first, he never rises; but if he stands, so as to have a sufficient space to lie down when he is tired, he lives in little want of food for ten days, or a fortnight. This is a fact well known to the Mendip farmers.

FEMALE GRATITUDE.

A YOUNG Englishman had rendered an essential service to a Mogul widow of distinction. In consequence of some deeds being mistranslated and misinterpreted by the Mahomedan lawyers, she was in danger of being defrauded of her fortune, when he interfered and detected the knavery. The lady requested an interview, that she might express her thanks to her benefactor, whom she had never yet seen. The young Englishman was conducted to her pavilion; the attendants withdrew; the lady entered, and, after some conversation, offered him a valuable jewel. His refusal of it seemed to hurt her. He made a transition from the brilliant gem to her antelope eyes, sparkling through the veil, and requested he might behold the face in which they shone.—She, unwilling to deny the only favour he would accept, withdrew her veil. The face was indeed as beautiful as he could have imagined; and he, who had not escaped the contamination of the Eastern immorality, began to press her farther. She assumed a

dignified air; and, in an impressive manner, assured him, that the deep sense of her obligation had alone induced her to deviate from established custom, in requesting this interview; but, a sense of her own honour, veneration for her husband's memory, and maternal example to her children, would ever regulate her conduct. However, that he might not think her ungrateful, she appointed another meeting the next evening, at the same place. Full of expectation he went to the appointment; and when the lady who received him threw back her veil, he discovered, not the mistress of the house, but another young Mogul; beautiful, witty, graceful, and—nothing coy, whom the widow, in her gratitude, had deputed to entertain him.

KIT.

THE RAILER.

THE characteristic of a Railer is always envy and ignorance—the enlightened mind will ever feel it a painful task to censure where envy does not exist.

Let a woman really beautiful, and perfectly amiable, appear in a circle, and the moment she draws forward a well-deserved admiration, the insidious railer supposes her proud—a coquette—or perhaps, no better than she should be; and then she concludes with a sentiment, that beauty is but a painted supulchre, not worth regarding unless united to an improved mind and honourable deportment; by which the auditors are to understand that the object of their attention is destitute of both, and consequently unworthy notice.

If a young lady dances well, it is immediately hinted that a good housewife would be a better partner for life; if she sings well, her husband may sometimes find her in a different tune; if she has vivacity, she is too giddy to be sensible; and if she is serious, she is certainly plotting mischief.

When, in company, I have heard a physician mentioned as a man of skill, I have known a person with a grave air and significant nod, accompanied sometimes with a shrug of the shoul-

ders, say, "Ay, ay, he might have made a good apothecary if he had stuck to his counter; but as a physician, pshaw! he wants talents, he wants education; the man's a good man, but then the cobbler should not go beyond his last." If a lawyer; it has been remarked that he talks well, but is cursed idle, he has not read the books. Nay, a divine, who has been acknowledged to have made a good discourse, has had all the labour of his pulpit destroyed by an observation that he practised one thing and preached another.

Yet, odious and dangerous as this character must appear to all judicious persons, it generally meets with more credit and reputation than it deserves. It cannot be surprising then that the man who has had the hardihood to appear in print, should even at his first onset, meet with attack. Every writer has, if possessed of any merit, met the censure of some brother or sister-scribe, who has endeavoured with great avidity to cry him down. Homer himself has met a Zoilus.

The Wit's Nunchion.

MR. WATSON, uncle to the late Marquis of Rockingham, a man of immense fortune, finding himself at the point of death, desired a friend who was present to reach him a drawer, in which was an old shirt, that he might put it on. Being asked why he would wish to change his linen when he was so ill, he replied, "Because I am told that the shirt I die in must be the nurse's perquisite, and that is good enough for her!" This was as bad as the old woman, who, with her last breath, blew out an inch of candle, "Because," said she, "I can see to die in the dark!"

IRISH BULL.—An Irish blockhead was once asked what age he was: "I am only twenty-six," he answered; "but I ought to be twenty-seven, for my mother miscarried the year before I was born!"

DR. JOHNSON.—The first time Dr.

Johnson was in company with Mrs. T. neither the elegance of his conversation, nor the depth of his knowledge, could prevent that lady's being shocked at his manners. Amongst other pieces of indecorum, his tea not being sweet enough, he put his fingers into the sugar-dish, and supplied himself with as little ceremony and concern as if there had not been a lady at the table. Every well-bred cheek was tinged with confusion; but Mrs. T. was so exasperated, that she ordered the sugar-dish immediately from the table, as if its contents had been contaminated by the fingers of Pomposo. The Doctor prudently took no notice, but peaceably swallowed, as usual, his several cups of tea. When he had done, instead of placing his cup and saucer upon the table, he threw them both very calmly under the grate. The whole tea-table was thrown into confusion. Mrs. T. screamed out, "Heavens! Doctor, what have you done? You have spoiled the handsomest set of china I have in the world!" "I am sorry for it, madam," answered Dr. Johnson; "but I assure you I did it out of pure good breeding; for, from your treatment of the sugar-dish, I supposed you would never touch any thing again that I once soiled with my fingers."

•THIEVES.

THERE WAS AN understrapper at Drury Lane Theatre of the name of Clough, who would insist, and I believe his information was pretty just, that thieves in this country are so far from being checked in their approach to the gallows, that they go on methodically, professionally, step by step, till they are what the informers call worth forty pounds. Nay, I have understood, I believe from credible information, that, in order to render them perfectly unconcerned as to their fate, they have meetings, where they are tried, cast, condemned, executed, put into their coffins, and afterwards brought to life; and, as all this indifference is inculcated from their infancy, they talk as naturally, and with as much

unconcern, of their death-bed at the Old Bailey as a sailor leaps into that hammock in which he may be sewed up, or a sensualist enters between scarlet sheets to press that mountain of down on which he is born to become a prey to the gout or the stone. Mr. Clough used to say that thieves were encouraged by the runners of rotation offices till, in their own language, "their time was come;" and that, to inure them to their certain fate, they never failed to attend executions. He told a story of one of those, who used to be so much favoured as now and then to be permitted, for love, to tie the knot. When his own hanging day arrived, he looked up at the clock with the utmost unconcern, and said to one of his companions, "I say, George, I think we are rather late to-day." There was something philosophical in Master Clough, and he was no fool: It only happened that this was the amusement most to his mind.

GRACE EXTRAORDINARY!—A certain country squire had a warren, and the village curate was Sunday after Sunday, regaled with the delicacy of rabbits, till he became so sick of them, that he took the liberty of hinting his dislike of the standing dish to the host, in the following Grace, on rising from the table:—

"Of rabbits hot, of rabbits cold,
Of rabbits tender, rabbits tough,
Of rabbits young, of rabbits old,
I thank the Lord, we've had enough!"

MARSHAL VILLARS.—Upon the death of the Duke of Vendome, under the reign of Louis XIV. Marshal Villars was made governor of Provence in his room; and when he went to take possession of his new government, the deputies of the province made him the usual present of a purse full of Louis d'ors; but the person who had the honour to present it, said to him, "Here, my lord, is such

another purse as that we gave to the Duke de Vendome, when, like you, he came to be our governor; but the prince, after accepting it, as a testimony of our regard to him, very generously returned it to us." "Ah!" said Villars, squeezing the purse into his pocket, "Monsieur Vendome was a most surprising man: he has not left his fellow behind!"

SOLVING ENIGMAS.—At a banquet, when solving enigmas was one of the diversions, Alexander the Great said to his courtiers, "What is that which did not come last year, has not come this year, and will not come next year?" A distressed officer starting up, said, "It must certainly be our arrears of pay!" The king was so diverted that he commanded him to be paid up, and also increased his salary.

MR. J. BLAND, many years manager of the Edinburgh theatre, one evening in particular, the theatre being but thinly attended, he came forward to dismiss the few that were there, which he did in the following manner: "Ladies and gentlemen, those that are here not being worth playing to, there will be no play this evening; but to-morrow **THIS PLAY AND FAREE** will be **REPEATED!**"

GONE OFF.—A gentleman hearing of the death of another,—"I thought," said he to a person in company, "you told me Mr. T.'s fever was gone off?" "O yes," replied the latter, "I did so, but I forgot to mention that he was gone off along with it!"

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED—Clio 3; Thalia B; Sic-Sic; W. T. Evans; and Jemmy Tickler. We assure Curiousus that his assistance is too valuable to be neglected in the manner he has chalked it out.

The solution of "Why is the author of the Nic-Nac like an oxen-killer?" is too much of a **HEADHITTER!**

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

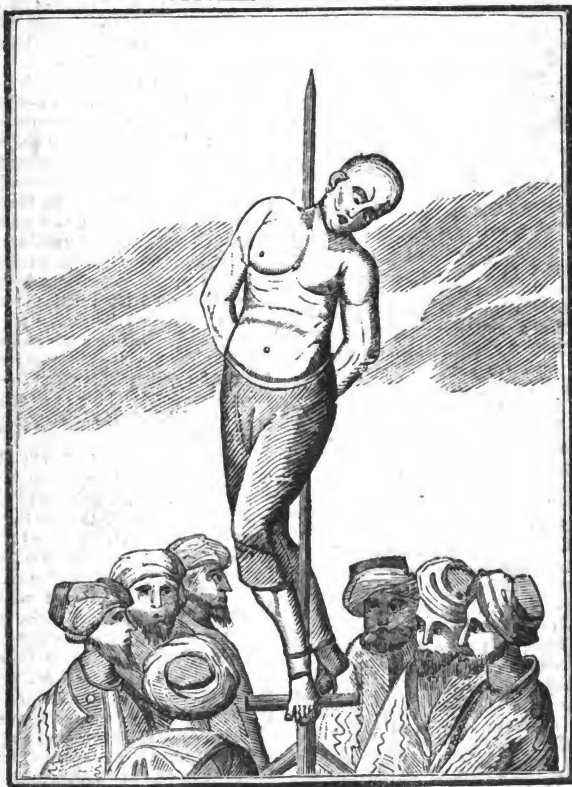
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 39.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



EMPALEMENT.

To explain the nature of this horrible punishment, we select the following narrative of the empalement of a Macassar Slave,* from Crawford's "History of the Indian Archipelago:"—

* Macassar is a large town of the island of Celebes in Asia.

"The criminal was led in the morning to the place of execution, and laid upon his belly, being held by four men. The executioner then made a transverse incision at the lower part of the body, and introduced the sharp point of the spike (which was about six feet long, and

made of polished iron) into the wound, so that it passed between the back bone and the skin. Two men drove it forcibly up, along the spine, while the executioner held the end, and gave it a proper direction, till it came out between the neck and the shoulders.

The lower end was then put into a wooden post, and rivetted fast; and the sufferer was lifted up, thus empaled, and the post stuck in the ground. At the top of the post, about ten feet from the ground, there was a kind of little bench, upon which the body rested. The insensibility or fortitude of the miserable sufferer was incredible. He did not utter the least complaint, except when the spike was rivetted into the pillar; the hammering and shaking occasioned by it, seemed to be intolerable to it, and he bellowed with pain. He sat in this dreadful situation till death put an end to his torments, which fortunately happened the next day, about three o'clock in the afternoon. He owed this speedy termination of his misery to a light shower of rain, which continued about an hour, and he gave up the ghost an hour after.

There have been instances, at Batavia, of criminals who have been empaled in the dry season, and have remained alive for eight or more days; without any food or drink, which is prevented being given them, by a guard placed there for that purpose. One of the surgeons of the city assured me, that none of the parts immediately necessary to life are injured by empalement, which makes the punishment the more cruel and intolerable: but that as soon as any water gets into the wound, it mortifies, and occasions a gangreen, which directly attacks the more vital parts, and brings on death immediately.

The miserable sufferer continually complained of insufferable thirst, which is peculiarly incident to this terrible punishment. The criminals are exposed during the whole day to the burning rays of the sun, and are unceasingly tormented by numerous stinging insects.

MASSACRE OF THE GARDIKIOTES.

AMONGST all the relations of Ali Pasha's cruelty and perfidy which have lately been published, none more strikingly evince the barbarity of his nature, or are distinguished by more appalling circumstances, than the following, extracted from Dr. Holland's "Travels in Albania":—

Gardiki was a large city, about ten miles to the west or north-west of Argyro-Kastro, with a population of Turks and Albanians, who had much property in the surrounding country, and were extremely independent and warlike in their habits. In the early part of Ali Pasha's life, when relying chiefly on the zeal and resolution of his mother, the Gardikiotes became his enemies, and endeavoured to dispossess him of his small territory. On a certain occasion, when with his mother and sister he was passing the night at some village in this part of the country, they laid a plot for surprising him and taking away his life. Ali, with difficulty, escaped, but his mother and sister were made prisoners, and conducted to Gardiki; where, after being exposed for thirty days to various outrages, particularly offensive to the usage of the Turks with respect to women, they were ignominiously sent away. This event never left the recollection of the family. His mother, it is said, did not cease, as long as she lived, to urge him to accomplish some work of revenge; and the influence she had over his mind was aided by his own temper, and by the opposition the Gardikiotes continued to offer to his growing power.

The situation, however, of Gardiki, and the protection afforded it by the Pashas of Berat and Delvino, made it impracticable for Ali to execute his designs till the beginning of 1812, when the subjugation of Argyro-Kastro, Delvino, &c. enabled him to surround Gardiki with his troops, and thus to prevent the escape of the inhabitants. It is not impossible that he might have taken the place before, but in this case many of them would have escaped, and he would have been foiled in his full work of vengeance.

Previous to his attack, he had contrived, by delusive means, to retain almost all the Gardikiotes within the city, with the expectation that they should not suffer more than the other conquered territory. His troops, to the number, it is said, of about 15,000 having surrounded the place, orders were given to attack it. The Turkish officers of his army,—either in consequence of the victorious defence of the people, or because they were unwilling to take a city, in the safety of which the Porte had directly interested itself, and where the inhabitants, though Mussulmans, were likely to be eventually sacrificed,—delayed their operations, and made little progress in the siege. The Vizier, it appears, began to be irritated by this tardiness, when Athanasius Bia came forward, and offered with a certain number of Albanians, to take the place by storm; though its position on the acclivity of a conical hill, rendered this an enterprize of much difficulty. His offer was accepted, and a single night put Gardiki into the Vizier's hands, after an interval of more than forty years from the commission of the original offence.

The inhabitants, who might be 5 or 6000 in number, were at first distributed into different places in the vicinity, with the exception of 35 of the Beys and principal people who were sent to Ioannina. On the morning of the 15th of March, nearly 800 of the Gardikiotes were brought into the area of a large Khan, a few miles to the north-east of Argyro-Kastro. The Vizier himself came in his carriage to the gate of the Khan, which was every where surrounded by his troops. The names of a certain number of the Gardikiotes were called out; who were allowed to depart from the area, and transported with the remainder of their countrymen into a sort of slavery in other parts of Albania. Those left within the Khan, who were said to be about 730 in number, were tied together with cords, to prevent the efforts that might be suggested by despair. They were all men, and selected, as it appears, either as having actually been in Gardiki at the time

when the mother and sister of Ali were imprisoned there, or as the direct descendants of those who bore part in the outrage. Orders were given to the soldiers who surrounded them, standing on the high walls of the Khan, that when a signal was made by the report of a fusil, they should fire upon the prisoners in the area. This fusil is said to have been discharged by the Vizier himself, as he sat in his carriage. The work of slaughter instantly began, and was continued without intermission, either by the musket or sabre, till not a single one of the Gardikiotes remained alive. The fate of some was delayed a short time by their escape into certain wooden buildings within the area. The Vizier, however, who remained himself on the spot, till the whole was completed, ordered fire to be put round these buildings, which drove the unhappy victims from their place of concealment. Some of them becoming desperate, took up stones, with which they wounded several of the soldiers employed in their destruction. At length, they all lay on the ground; every opening to the area was closed up; and the bodies were left without burial, to attest yet more strongly the vengeance which led to the act.

On the same day, the 35 Gardikiotes, who had been carried to Ioannina, and treated there with a delusive kindness, were transported to the other side of the lake; and shared the same fate as the rest. Even there the work was not completed, for one or two of the principal inhabitants of Gardiki, who had been absent at the time the city was taken, being afterwards seduced to return; were murdered, and their bodies sent to the spot where the others had perished.

♦ ANCIENT PUNISHMENTS.

PRESUMING that nothing will be unacceptable to the readers of your miscellany, relative to that renowned enemy of the Stage, Wm. Prynne, author of the celebrated Treatise, containing 1156 pages, entitled, "Histrio Mastix, the Players' Scourge."

or Actors' Tragedy," I have selected from the "Harleian Miscellany" some curious particulars relative to this extraordinary man, recorded under the following head:—"A brief relation of certain special and most material passages and speeches in the Star Chamber, occasioned and delivered June 14, 1637, at the censure of those three worthy gentlemen, Dr. Bastwicke, Mr. Burton, and Mr. Prynne, as it hath been truly and faithfully gathered from their own mouths by one present at the said censure, printed in the year 1638."

"Between eight and nine o'clock in the morning of the 14th of June, the lords being set in their places in the said court of the star chamber, and easting their eyes upon the prisoners at the bar, Sir John Finch, the chief justice to common pleas, began to speak after this manner:—

"I had thought Mr. Prynne had had no ears, but methinks he hath ears;" which caused many of the lords to take a stricter view of him; and, for their better satisfaction, the usher of the court was commanded to turn up his hair and show his ears; upon the sight whereof the lords were displeased they had been formerly no more cut off, and cast out some disgraceful words of him; to which Mr. Prynne replied, "My lords, there is never a one of your honours but would be sorry to have your ears as mine are."

The lord keeper replied, "again, in good faith he is somewhat saucy." "I hope," said Mr. P. "Your honours will not be offended, I pray God give me ears to hear."—"The business of the day," said the lord keeper, "is to proceed on the prisoners at the bar."

Prynne then humbly desired the court to give him leave to make a motion relative to accepting a cross bill against the prelates; this being refused, he prayed that the prelates might be dismissed from having any voice in the censure about to be passed, as he said it was not agreeable with equity or justice that they who are adversaries should be judges. "In good faith it is a sweet motion," said

the lord keeper, and the business of the day was proceeded in. The information was read, and four books annexed thereunto, viz—A book of Dr. Bastwicke's written in Latin. The second, a little book entitled, "News from Ipswich." The third entitled, "A divine Tragedy, recording God's fearful judgments on Sabbath Breakers." The fourth, Mr. Burton's book entitled, "An Apology of an Appeal to the King's most excellent Majesty, with Two Sermons for God and the King," preached on the fifth of November last. The fifth, Dr. Bastwicke's Litany.

After many passages from the several books had been read, that which related immediately to Prynne was read by Mr. Littleton the King's solicitor, being certain passages in the "divine tragedy;" and he enlarged particularly upon one concerning Mr. Wm. Noy, his Majesty's late Attorney, who he said was most shamefully abused by a slander laid upon him, which was that God's Judgment fell upon him for prosecuting that innocent person Mr. Prynne, which judgment was, that he laughing at Mr. P. while he was suffering upon the pillory, was struck with an issue of blood, which by all the art of man could never be stopped till the day of his death, which was soon after. But Mr. Littleton asserted that it was false, as Mr. Noy had that issue long before. Prynne then made a speech, and afterwards Lord Cothington passed the following censure:—

"I condemn these three men to lose their ears in the Palace-yard at Westminster; to be fined five thousand pounds a Man to his Majesty; and to perpetual imprisonment in three remote places of the Kingdom, namely, the Castles of Caernarvon, Cornwall, and Lancaster."

The Lord Finch added to this censure,

Mr. Prynne to be stigmatized in the cheeks with two letters (S. L.) for a "seditious libeller." To which all the lords agreed. Then follows the account of the execution of the Lords' censure in the star chamber upon Dr. Bastwicke, Mr. Prynne, and Mr.

Burton, in the Palace-yard at Westminster, the 30th day of June, 1637, at the spectation whereof, the number of people was so great (the place being very large) that it caused admiration in all that beheld them, who came with tender affection to behold these thus renowned soldiers and servants of Jesus Christ, who came with most undaunted and magnanimous courage thereunto, having their way strewed with sweet herbs from the house out of which they came to the pillory, with all the honour that could be done unto them. Dr. Bastwicke and Mr. Burton meeting, they did close one on the other's arms each three times; then immediately after Mr. Prynne came, the doctor and he saluting as Mr. Burton did before. The doctor then went up first on the scaffold, and his wife immediately following, came up to him, and like a loving spouse saluted each ear with a kiss, and then his mouth; which tender love, boldness, and cheerfulness so wrought upon the people's affection that they gave a marvellous great shout for joy to behold it.

Her husband desired her not to be in the least manner dismayed at his sufferings, and so for a while they parted, she using these words "Farewell, my dearest, be of good comfort, I am not dismayed;" and then the doctor made a speech. Prynne afterwards shook the doctor by the hand, and desired him that he might speak a word or two: "With all my heart," said the doctor—and Prynne made a long speech upon his case, and explained the nature of a libel. The executioner shortly after came to sear him and cut off his ears. Mr. Prynne said "Come, friend, come, burn me—cut me—I fear not; I have learned to fear the fire of hell, and not what man can do unto me; come, sear me—sear me; I shall bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." The bloody executioner performed his task with extraordinary cruelty, heating his iron twice to burn one cheek, and cut one of his ears so close, that he cut off a piece of his cheek. At which exquisite torture, he never moved with his body, or so much as changed

his countenance, but still looked up as well as he could towards heaven with a smiling countenance, even to the astonishment of all the beholders, and uttering as soon as the executioner had done this heavy sentence—"The more I am beaten down, the more am I lifted up;" and, returning from the execution in a boat, made two verses by the way, on the two characters branded on his cheeks. S. L. Stigmata Laudis:—

*Stigmata maxillis referens insignia Laudis,
Exultans remeo, victima grata Deo.*

Which one since, thus Englished,
S. L. Laud's Scars.

Triumphant I return, my face describes
Laud's scorching scars, God's grateful sacrifice. ¶

Interesting Varieties.

STEAM NAVIGATION.

THE following account of the accommodation of a steam-boat at the ferry of Alloa, shows the improvement to which this mode of conveyance may be brought:—Post-chaises, carts, and carriages of every description, are driven into and out of the boat without unharnessing the horses; and gentlemen in gigs, who formerly had the trouble of taking off their horses, and hoisting their gigs into the boat, with no small risk to the vehicle itself, now drive on board, cross the river, and drive on again, without even descending from their carriages. Gentlemen on horseback never think of dismounting. A few days ago, ten carts, loaded with malt from Glasgow, each weighing two tons, crossed at one time. On Saturday se'nnight, a detachment of upwards of twenty of the Clackmannanshire yeomanry cavalry marched down the March pier, entered the boat, drew up on deck with as much order as if they had been on the parade, crossed, and returned, without so much as disordering their line of march, to the great surprise and entertainment of the numerous spectators who witnessed this novel and amusing sight.

DOCTOR POZZ.

THE subjoined ludicrous imitation of the style in which Boswell has written his *Life of Johnson*, appeared in one of the public prints about the time that work was published:—

Lesson in Biography ;
Or, How to write the Life of one's Friend.

"AN EXTRACT FROM THE LIFE OF DR. POZZ, IN TEN VOLUMES POLIO, WRITTEN BY James Bozz, Esq." WHO flourished WITH HIM NEAR FIFTY YEARS.

We dined at the chop-house. Dr. Pozz was this day very instructive. We talked of books: I mentioned the "History of Tommy Trip." I said it was a great work: Pozz. "Yes, sir, it is a great work; but, sir, it is a great work relatively; it was a great work to you, when you were a little boy; but now, sir, you are a great man, and Tommy Trip is a little boy." I felt somewhat hurt at this comparison, and I believe he perceived it; for, as he was squeezing a lemon, he said, "Never be affronted at a comparison. I have been compared to many things, but I never was affronted. No, sir, if they were to call me a dog, and you a cannister tied to my tail, I would not be affronted."

Cheered by this kind mention of me, though in such a situation, I shewed him some lines I had made upon a pair of breeches. Pozz. "Sir, the lines are good; but where could you find such a subject in your country?" Bozz. "Therefore it is a proof of invention, which is a characteristic of poetry." Pozz. "Yes, sir, but an invention which few of your countrymen can enjoy." I reflected afterwards on the depth of this remark; it affords a proof of that acuteness which he displayed in every branch of literature.

* * * * *

Next day I left town, and was absent for six weeks, three days, and seven hours, as I find by a memorandum in my journal. In this time I had only one letter from him, which is as follows:—

To James Bozz, Esq.

"Dear Sir,—My bowels have been

very bad. Pray buy for me some Turkey rhubarb, and bring with you a copy of your TOUR.

"Write me soon, and write me often.

"I am, dear sir,

"Yours affectionately,
"Sain. Pozz."

It would have been unpardonable to have omitted a letter like this, in which we see so much his great and illuminated mind.

* * * * *

I mentioned a tradesman who had lately set up his coach. Pozz. "He is right, sir; a man who would go on swimmingly, cannot too soon get off his legs. That man keeps his coach; now, sir, a coach is better than a chaise; sir, it is better than a chariot." Bozz. "Why, sir?"—Pozz. "Sir, it will hold more." I begged he would repeat this, that I might remember it, and he complied with great good humour. "Dr. Pozz," said I, "you ought to keep a coach."—Pozz. "Yes, sir, I ought."—Bozz. "But you do not, and that has often surprised me." Pozz. "Surprised you! There, sir, is another prejudice of absurdity. Sir, you ought to be surprised at nothing. A man that has lived half your days ought to be above all surprise. Sir, it is a rule with me never to be surprised. It is mere ignorance; you cannot guess why I do not keep a coach, and you are surprised. Now, sir, if you did know, you would not be surprised." I said, tenderly, "I hope, my dear sir, you will let me know before I leave town."—Pozz. "Yes, sir, you shall know now. You shall not go to Mr. Wilkins, and to Mr. Jenkins, and to Mr. Stubbs, and say 'Why does not Pozz keep a coach?' I will tell you myself.—Sir, I can't afford it."

ROUND ROBIN.—It was customary among the ancients to write names, whether of the Gods, or of their friends, in a circle, that none might take offence at seeing another's name preferred to his own. The Cordeliers have formerly been known to have paid the same attention to delicacy, and when a Pope has demanded the

names of some priests of their order, that one might be raised to the purple, they have sent those names written circularly, that they might not seem to recommend onemore than another. The race of sailors are the only people who preserve this very ancient custom in its purity, for when any remonstrance is on foot among them, they sign it in a circle, and call it a Round Robin.

BYE-PAST TIME.

THE sky is blue, the sward is green,
The leaf upon the bow is seen,
The wind comes from the balmy west,
The little songster builds its nest;
The bee hums on from flow'r to flow'r,
Till twilight's dim and pensive hour;
The joyous year arrives; but when
Shall bye-past times come back again?

I think on childhood's glowing years,
How soft, how bright the scene appears!
How calm, how cloudless, pass'd away
The long, long summer holiday!
I may not muse,—I must not dream—
Too beautiful these visions seem
For earth and mortal man; but when
Shall bye-past times come back again?

I think of sunny eves so soft,
Too deeply felt, enjoyed too oft,
When thro' the bloomy fields I rov'd
With her, the earliest, dearest lov'd;
Around whose form I yet survey,
In thought, a bright celestial ray
To present scenes denied;—ah! when
Shall bye-past times come back again?

Alas! the world, at distance seen,
Appear'd all blissful and serene;
An Eden, form'd to tempt the foot,
With crystal streams, and golden fruit;
That world, when tried and trod, is found
A rocky waste, a thorny ground!
We then revert to youth; but when
Shall bye-past times return again?

STANZAS.

I do not weep that thou art laid
Within the silent tomb;
I weep not that the cold death-shade
Hath marr'd thy youth's sweet bloom.
'Tis with no wish to break thy sleep
These tears thy grave bedew;
Ah, no! ah, no! I only weep,
I am not sleeping too.

What is my life but a vain show
Of its last hope bereft?
What spell can soothe the soul of woe,
That has but memory left?
How dear, how very dear thou art,
These bitter drops may tell;
Sole treasure of my lonely heart,
A long and sad farewell!

The Wit's Nunchion.

THE governor of Guernsey, wishing one Sunday to inspect the fortifications round the island, sent to the commanding officer of engineers to desire his attendance. This gentleman, who was a very excellent officer and worthy man, happened to have rather devouter notions of the duties of the Sabbath than are generally entertained by the military. When the general's orders were delivered to him, he was at his private devotions. He instantly, however, obeyed the mandate of his commander, but at the same time piously represented to him that the Sabbath was a day which he generally set apart for the exercises of religious duties, and acts of grace and FAITH. The general having listened attentively to the engineer's scruples of conscience, replied, "I tell you what M——, FAITH may be very well, but in an engineer, GOOD WORKS ARE BETTER."

THE admirable talent of JOKING was never better exerted or with more lively effect, than at a recent CONVERSATION in the vicinity of Grosvenor Square, by a certain antiquated belle, perhaps not very celebrated for the flippancy of her wit, but certainly particularly happy on the occasion alluded to. A lady of distinction, ascending the staircase to join the party above, accidentally dropped a beautiful diamond cross, which, for a few minutes, was not missed. A diligent search was presently instituted, but without effect, and the thing was given up as lost; when the belle already mentioned, in drawing her handkerchief from her reticule, ACCIDENTALLY exposed the pre-

cious gem. Amazement, mixed with suspicion, was painted on every countenance. The lady herself seemed a little embarrassed, and it is presumed, had she moved in a less elevated sphere, the interference of Sir R. Birnie would have been deemed indispensable. But, suspect a person of quality of dishonorable intentions—ridiculous! An hysterical laugh, accompanied by a declaration that she had merely secreted the jewel for the purpose of amusement, decided the business. The company gravely remarked that it was a good joke, and returned to their recreations.

In one point, at least, our modern dramatists are superior to the ancients; namely, in omitting Chorusses, which are always offensive to common sense, and constantly destroying every idea of probability. About sixty years ago, a satirical piece, called, "The Wishes, or Harlequin's Mouth opened," was performed in the summer season, at Drury Lane, under the management of Murphy and Foote. It commenced with an episode in the mock-tragic style, entitled "Gunpowder Treason," of which the supposed writer, Mr. Distress, made Guy Faux the hero. When Guy proposes to blow up the Parliament House, the Chorus exhorts him to reject so barbarous an enterprize. Guy, however, continues immoveably fixed, and prepares to execute it; on which one of the spectators naturally inquires "Why the Chorus does not immediately send for a constable, and carry the villain before a magistrate?"—"Pooh! Pooh!" answers the author, "that would be natural, and the Chorus is never to discover a secret."

SHENSTONE—The finest specimen of French-English verse extant, is certainly the following inscription which M. Gerardin placed at Ermenonville, to the memory of Shenstone:—

"This plain stone,
To William Shenstone.
In his writings he display'd
A mind natural.
At Leasowes he laid
Arcadian greens rural.

Shenstone used to thank God that his name was not liable to a pun. He little thought that it was liable to such a rhyme as this.

WIT OF THE BANK CLERKS.—These gentlemen have never, that I am aware of, been particularly remarkable for wit or humour, but in the "Gentleman's Magazine" for August, 1731, p. 363, I find the following specimen of their good things, which being in its original situation hidden under a bushel, I shall transcribe for the information of readers of the present day:—

"Tuesday, August 31. The tickets for the State Lottery were delivered out to the subscribers at the Bank of England; when the crowd being so great as to obstruct the clerks, they told them—'We deliver Blanks to-day, but to-morrow we shall deliver Prizes.' Upon which, many, who were by no means for Blanks, retired, and the clerks had room to proceed in their business by this stratagem."

LORD CLIVE asked the chaplain of one of the regiments in India, for a toast, who with much simplicity exclaimed, 'Alas and alack-a-day! what can I give?'—'Nothing better,' replied his lordship. 'Come, gentlemen, a bumper to the parson's toast, 'A lass and a lack a day.'

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Owing to various circumstances, we have been somewhat inattentive to our Correspondents of late; but we promise that such neglect shall not occur again.

RECEIVED.—A. Z., Albumania, D., Clio (4), Urania, Curiosus, George, and Carolus. Some of these will be more particularly noticed next week; and the History of the English Stage resumed.

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

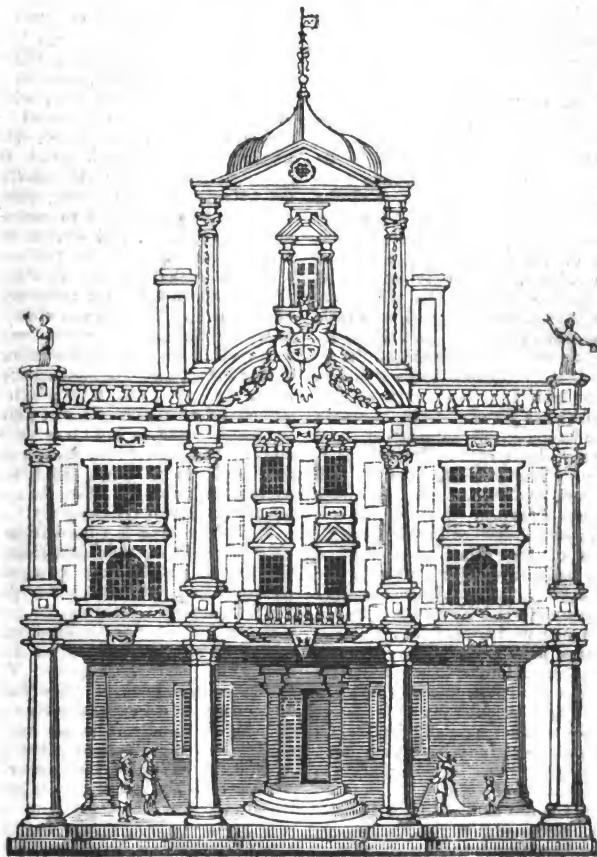
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 40.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 30, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKSPEARE.



DUKE'S THEATRE, DORSET GARDENS.

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE, SECTION 11.—The theatre occupied by Davenant's company in Portugal Street, as related in Sec 10, proving

too small, and otherwise inconvenient, Sir W. Davenant, some time before his death, set about erecting a new one, on a larger and more splen-

did scale. For its site he fixed on Dorset Gardens near Water Lane, Fleet Street, contiguous to the spot upon which the Salisbury-Court Theatre stood, and very near to the water-side. This building, however, he did not live to see completed, as he died in April 1668, and it was not ready for the performance of plays until the 6th of November, 1671, when it was opened by the company under the management of Lady Davenant, his widow, with Dryden's "Sir Martin Marall," which was played three nights to crowded audiences, although it had been previously acted thirty at the old theatre; but the attraction probably lay more in the novelty of the house, than in the merit of the play. Great dislike was evinced to the opening of the theatre on the part of the citizens, and every nerve was strained to prevent it, but the players in this instance triumphed over their opponents, and, for a short time, pursued their career very successfully.

The design for this house is said to have been the production of Sir Christopher Wren; and it appears to have been built in the most splendid manner, both externally and internally. The chief front faced the Thames, and was ornamented with a handsome portico. The interior was richly embellished, and decorated with busts of the principal dramatists. The building and scenery together cost 5,000*l*. Compared with the enormous sums which have been expended upon our modern theatres, this appears a mere trifle, but it was far more than had hitherto been dedicated to such a purpose, and was in those days a very serious sum.

For a short period, the Duke's company performed here with good success; but public opinion giving the preference to the King's, which numbered amongst its members Hart, Mohun, Burt, Winterset, Joe Haines, and others, they found their audiences begin to decline, and accordingly were obliged to call in the aid of splendid scenery, dresses, dancing, &c. to enable them to make a stand against their rivals. This had the desired effect; at least it increased the num-

ber of their visitors, and decreased the profits of the other theatre; but still without adding greatly to their own; since the expenses which these novelties occasioned, completely absorbed their profits; and thus the contending companies were bringing ruin upon one another, without the prospect of any advantage to either of them. In this state of things, a junction of their forces seemed advisable, and was effected in 1682, through the exertions of Betterton; upon which the Duke's Company removed to Drury-Lane, and the actors, thus united, were henceforth called His Majesty's Servants. The Dorset-Gardens' House was not, however, wholly deserted; they continued to perform at it occasionally, and several new pieces were subsequently produced there. On the accession of James the Second, in 1685, the appellation of The Duke's Theatre was changed to that of The Queen's in compliment to his wife. Dramatic performances appear to have finally terminated there about the year 1696, after which it was used for the exhibitions of prize-fighters, &c. and in 1769 was pulled down. The site was for many years afterwards a wood-yard, and is now we believe occupied by offices belonging to the New River Company.

The above view is copied from a plate which forms the frontispiece to the "Empress of Morocco," a tragedy, by Elkanah Settle, which was performed here with great success, and was the first play embellished with copper-plates, of which it has five, besides the one we have given. The "Gentleman's Magazine" for July, 1814, contains a view of this theatre, differing essentially from that which accompanies these remarks, but no account is afforded of the manner in which it was obtained, or from whence it was copied. The accuracy of the plate given in Settle's piece may certainly be relied on; but perhaps both the views are correct, and the variations were occasioned by the theatre being repaired; or they may represent different points of view. In our next section we shall give a copy of another of the plates from the "Empress of

Morocco," representing the interior of the house.—(Continued on p. 329.)

JOHNSON'S DICTIONARY.

THE most trivial circumstances connected with the writings and actions of such a man as Johnson, are deeply interesting. It has often been remarked, that some of the explanations which occur in his Dictionary are highly curious, from their betraying his personal opinions and prejudices; others from the blunders they contain; and others from the abstruseness of the definitions, which, in fact, are far more difficult to be understood, than the words they are intended to illustrate. I have selected a few specimens of these,* and here lay them before the reader, accompanied by such anecdotes as presented themselves to my memory. His favourite topic, ridicule of the Scotch, is thus introduced:—

"OATS. A grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people."

Every admirer of his general character, and friend to consistency, must regret that he deigned to accept a Pension. The sarcasms which this circumstance drew upon him must have been rendered doubly galling, when he reflected on the sentiments he had in the early part of his life entertained on the subject; and which he promulgated in the following words:—

"PENSION. An allowance made to any one without an equivalent. In England it is generally understood to mean pay given to a state hireling for treason to his country.

"PENSIONER. One who is supported by an allowance paid at the will of another. A dependant. A slave of state, hired by a stipend to obey his master."

Johnson was attacked upon this point by Churchill, in his poem called "The Ghost;" where he was bitterly reproached with his apostacy. When Johnson read the invective,

he said, "If I can't bear this, I don't deserve my money."—His early political principles were pretty plainly expressed by his definitions of the terms Whig and Tory:—

"TORY. One who adheres to the ancient constitution of the state, and the apostolical hierarchy of the Church of England.

"WHIG. The name of a faction."

The expression of his antipathies was not limited to party-matters; it extended to certain occupations and professions which had become obnoxious to him. Take two examples:—

"STOCK-JOBBER. A low wretch, who gets money by buying and selling Shares in the Funds.

"EXCISE. A hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the common judges of property, but wretches hired by those to whom excise is paid:—Example,

"Can hire large houses, and oppress the poor,
By farm'd Excise."

Dryden's Juvenal, Sat. 3.

This latter sarcasm so exasperated some of the persons against whom it was directed, that they determined on a prosecution for libel; and the advice of counsel was taken upon the subject. They were, however, advised to aim at a compromise with Johnson, and accompany their threat of legal proceedings, with an intimation that the business should proceed no farther, provided he would not insert the obnoxious passage in his second edition. Johnson, however, treated their overtures with perfect scorn; and the gentlemen, perceiving they were not likely to gain much honour by the contest, wisely suffered the affair to fall to the ground.

Johnson found means to gratify a pique he had conceived against Mallet, by a hit at his change of name, which was properly Malloch; and which he altered, upon his rising into notice; partly, as it is thought, from a desire to conceal his origin, and partly because he fancied the adopted name was the more musical of the two. In Johnson's Folio edition, he thus explained the word Alias:—

* My extracts are from the first edition, in folio.

"**ALIAS**, a Latin word, signifying otherwise; often used in the trials of criminals, whose danger has obliged them to change their names; as Simpson alias Smith, alias Baker; that is, otherwise Smith, otherwise Baker."

This passage was also printed in the Quarto edition; but in the Octavo abridgement of 1756, he changed the illustration to,—*"as Malloch alias Mallet."*

That his ardent mind was often disgusted with the tiresome task of compiling a Dictionary, can scarcely be doubted. He once or twice displays this, by satirical notices of the occupation; as thus:—

"**GRUB-STREET**. Originally the name of a street in Moorfields, London, much inhabited by writers of small histories, dictionaries, and temporary poems; whence, any mean production is called grub-street."

"**LEXICOGRAPHER**. A writer of dictionaries; a harmless drudge, that busies himself in tracing the original, and detailing the signification of words."

His fondness for social meetings and clubs at taverns is well known. We learn from Boswell that he frequently said he never felt so much at his ease, or so completely at home, as when thus situated. He did not omit the opportunity of expressing this feeling, afforded by the word *Club*:—

CLUB. "An assembly of good fellows, meeting under certain conditions."

And his attachment to his native city, led him to find a niche for it, under pretence of explaining an obsolete word:—

"**LICH**. Lichfield, the field of the dead, a city in Staffordshire, so named from martyred christians."

Of the definitions mentioned in the commencement of this paper, wherein the terms he employs to convey his meaning, are so abstruse as to bewilder, rather than assist the enquirer, two specimens, selected from numerous others, will be sufficient:—

"**NETWORK**. Anything reticulated, or decussated, at equal distances, with interstices between the intersections."

"**TWIST**. To form by complication; to form by convolution. To be contorted; to be convolved."

An instance of laughable definition occurs under the word *Boy*, which he thus explains, "A male child, not a girl." Of his blunders it may suffice to quote

"**LEEWARD**. Towards the wind."

"**WINDWARD**. Towards the wind."

"**PASTER**. The knee of a horse."

When a lady, in the expectation of hearing him enter upon a laboured defence, once asked him how he came to commit this last blunder, he merely replied, "Sheer ignorance, madam, nothing more."

To an affected lady, who told him that she highly approved of his not having admitted any improper words into his work, he said, "What, then, I suppose, madam, you have been looking for them."

In the Remarks on the English Language, prefixed to his first edition, he inadvertently said, "the letter H seldom, perhaps never, begins any but the first syllable." This rash assertion gave rise to a lively essay, written by Wilkes, and printed in "The Public Advertiser." He adduced many instances in opposition to Johnson's remark; and observed, "the writer of this observation must be a man of quick apprehension, and a most comprehensive genius." In his third edition, Johnson omitted the words "perhaps never," and added the following paragraph, "It sometimes begins middle or final syllables, in words compounded; as block-head; or from the Latin, as comprehensive."

Soon after the Dictionary had been published, Garrick being asked by Johnson what people said of it, told him that, among other animadversions, it was objected he had cited authorities which were beneath the dignity of such a work; and instanced Richardson. "Nay," said Johnson, "I have done worse than that, for I have cited thee, David."

The work was long in hand; and its progress depending upon Johnson's fits of activity, was often de-

layed altogether; insomuch that the patience of the proprietors became exhausted. When he dispatched the last portion of the MS. the bookseller, who had the superintendence of the printing, told the messenger to give his compliments to Johnson, and say that he thanked God he had done with him. Upon this being reported to Johnson, he exclaimed, "I'm glad that he has grace enough to thank God for anything." LEXIPHANES.

Interesting Varieties.

HINTS TO MOURNERS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NIC-NAC.

SIR,—Dean Swift, in his usual satirical manner, once remarked, that "he always saw the merriest faces in mourning coaches." I am not prepared, Mr. Editor, to go so far as this, but I certainly think we are apt to pay too little regard to appearances on the demise of our friends. Some attention to decorum should undoubtedly be observed; and as I have never met with any rules for the guidance of our conduct on these melancholy occasions, perhaps the following outlines may furnish a superior pen with hints for a more extensive plan: which, I am convinced, would prove highly acceptable to all who wish to appear "good sort of people" in the eyes of the world; but who, from there being no established rules of etiquette, are too often misled (notwithstanding the purity of their intentions) by the frailty of their judgment. You will confer a great obligation on me by inserting my Hints, and I am quite sure they will be acceptable to many of your readers.

SOMERS TOWN,
Aug. 3. 1823

ARISTIDES.

A WIFE LOSING HER HUSBAND.

Should not appear in public the first week; nor in private without a white handkerchief.

The second Sunday—should be seen at church; much affected with the Sermon; skilful use of the handkerchief not omitted.

May go to a tragedy after the first month, and weep in character, either at the play, or at the loss of her husband.

The third month she may laugh at a play, or dance at a ball, with her intended bridegroom: and the fourth month may jump into his arms, and finish her widowhood.

A HUSBAND LOSING HIS WIFE.

Must weep, or seem to weep, at the funeral; should not appear in the saloon the first week; should vent a proper sigh whenever and wherever good wives or matrimony happen to be mentioned.

May take a mistress into keeping the third week, provided, he had not one before; and appear at Covent Garden with her at the expiration of the month.

AN HEIR LOSING HIS FATHER.

It would be more decent (if it can be avoided) not to break out before the funeral. Horses, dogs, and gay equipages may however be getting ready; plans of which, dispositions of gardens, and the like, may in the mean time be examined; additional servants hired, and even put into mourning. The ladies may visit him (after the funeral) or he may visit them (before), provided some little precaution is used to prevent scandal. He may frequent the gaming table; and if he be not ruined at the expiration of his mourning, he need only change his dress, and pursue the same plan as long as his fortune lasts.

• THE COBBLER AND THE BUTCHER.

A BUTCHER in the country stopped at an inn, and went into the parlour, leaving his horse at the door, with a calf strapped across its back. In the tap-room was a cobbler, with some of his companions, making merry, and the landlord coming in, the cobbler said, "Landlord, if you will give us a gallon of beer, I'll engage to steal that calf across the horse at the door." "With all my heart," cried the landlord; "bring it to me, and I will give you two gallons." The cobbler then perceiving the butcher to be upon the move, whipped into his stall, took a pair of new shoes, and set off before him. About half a mile from the house he left one of the shoes in the

road, and half a mile further, in a little wood, he dropped the other. The butcher soon espied the first. "Od rot it!" says he, "it is but an odd shoe at the best, so I will even jog on." Coming to the wood, however, and seeing the other—"Wounds!" cried he "here's the fellow; I will go back and fetch the other, the pair is worth having." So he dismounted, and went back for the other shoe, tying his horse to the arm of a tree. The cobbler then ran from his hiding place, unstrapped the calf, and setting off by another road, got to the inn with it, and put it into a stable. Shortly after came the butcher, with a pitiful countenance, and acquainted the landlord with his misfortune; telling him at the same time, that he and his family would be ruined, as the real was bespoke by one of his best customers, and that he had rode upwards of fifteen miles that day to fetch it. "I am really sorry for your misfortune," said the landlord; "but I have a pretty good calf in my stable, and rather than you should go without one, I'll sell it to you."—"I'll buy it, and return you a thousand thanks," replied the butcher. Accordingly the calf was brought, and the butcher examined it. "Ay," said he, I like this calf well enough, but it's not near so fat as the one I lost." The money being paid, the calf was once more strapped on the horse, and off set the butcher again. "Now," said the cobbler, "landlord, if you will stand some drink, I'll engage to steal it again."—"Agreed!" cried the landlord: so off set the cobbler along a bye-road, and arriving first at the wood, when the butcher came into it, began to imitate the cry of a calf. "Ah! ah!" says the butcher, "what are you there?" thinking it was the calf he had lost, and that some unlucky person had unstrapped it, and let it loose. So he dismounted and went after it. The cobbler still kept bellowing, and drew him a great way into the wood; then running back, unstrapped the calf, and fled to the inn with it. The butcher having toiled about to no purpose, gave it up as a bad job; but on returning, and perceiving the calf

gone again, he was quite amazed and distracted, and rode back as fast as he could to the inn. "How fares it, master butcher?" said the landlord. "How fares it! why I have lost the other calf I bought of you;—and the wood about a mile from your house is haunted; I would not ride through it again, if any body would give me a hundred guineas."—"Come, come!" continued the landlord, "if your first calf is returned to you, with the money you paid for the second, will you freely forgive the aggressor?"—"Ay, that I will, with all my heart," said the butcher. The landlord, acquainted him with the tricks, and gave him the calf and the money; the butcher returned the cobbler his shoes, and a crown to drink, for his ingenuity, and set off well contented.

STANZAS.

The linnet caroll'd not more light,
To woodland and to wild,
Than I, when on my raptur'd sight
Youth's glowing morning smil'd.
But, ah! the flash of morning bright
Is wrapt in low'ring clouds;
My trembling soul, a fearful night
In boding darkness shrouds.
Ah! fool, I saw no ill to dread
Within the bow'r of love;
Nor fear'd the deadly snake that fed
Beneath the flow'rs I wove.
Now ev'ry blossom has declin'd,
Touch'd by its venom'd breath;
And all the roses passion twin'd
Are turned to weeds of death.
AUG. 24.

LOUISA,

THE MAIDEN'S HUSBAND.

Gentle in personage,
Conduct and equipage;
Noble by heritage;
Generous and free;
Brave, not romantic;
Learn'd, not pedantic;
Gay, but not frantic;
This must he be.
Honour maintaining,
Meanness disdaining,
Still entertaining,
Engaging and new;
Neat but not finical;
Sage, but not cynical;
Never tyrannical,
But ever true.

W. M.

A CURIOUS JESUITICAL LETTER, ADDRESSED BY CARDINAL RICHLIEU TO THE ABBE BOUFFLERS.

SIR,—Matthew Comprey, a Friar, of the Order of St. Benedict, is to be the bearer to you of this letter. He is one of the most vicious persons that I ever yet knew, and has earnestly desired me that I would give him a letter of recommendation, which I granted to his importunity. Believe me, my dear sir, it were pity you should be mistaken, in not knowing him, as many others have been who are of my best friends. Hence it is that I desire to advertise you to take special notice of him, and say nothing in his presence in any sort; for, I will and do assure you there cannot be a more unworthy person in the world, I very well know that as soon as you shall be acquainted with him, you will thank me for this advice. civility relieves me from the necessity of saying any thing more on this subject.

I am, your affectionate friend,

Jno. Armand de Plessis,

Car. de Richlien.

Paris, Nov. 29, 1638.

* * The letter is to be read either across the page, or merely down the left-hand column.

The Wit's Nunchion.

CURIOUS LETTER, sent by one of the lamplighters of Covent Garden Theatre to the treasurer of that house:—

“Sir,—I am mutch as wesul. Pless to send the munney by the bear; it is my whiff; and I setts upon thrones tell she cum back.

Your humbel sarvant,
H. TOMAS.”

FREEDOM OF THE THEATRE.—The following account of a somewhat hazardous method of gaining the freedom of a theatre, is given in the “Gentleman’s Magazine:”—

“Tuesday, 6th February, 1739 At Covent Garden Theatre, one John Somerford tumbled from the Upper Gallery into the Pit, being ten yards, without receiving any hurt. When the play was over, he told Mr. Rich

that he had made himself free of the gallery, and hoped he should have the liberty of going ino it when he pleased; to which Mr. Rich consented, provided he never again came out of it in the same abrupt manner.”—It was lucky for Somerford that the theatre of 1739 was not quite so lofty as the present one, for had that been the case, he would most assuredly have “jumped the world to come.”

DR. HIFFERNAN.—Of this eccentric genius some curious anecdotes were given in a late amusing publication. He was the author of several works on the drama, and his writings were just as curious as his actions. Amongst these is a “Theory on the Art of Acting,” contained in a volume called “Miscellanies,” which is now remembered only for its eccentricity. A specimen of this treatise may perhaps amuse the reader. Describing the mechanical manner in which the players generally die in the last act,

he draws a caricature scene of a man being run through the body, with a spit, by his landlady, on his incapacity to pay his reckoning; an idea of the vulgar extravagancy which he has run into on this occasion, may be formed from the concluding lines:—

“—Uph!”—

“Here a general contraction of the body, which, as nothing violent can last long, is to be succeeded by a gradual evolution of the members, and the two following lines are to be uttered in the farewell, endearing, melancholy tone:—

“Farewell, ye cauliflowers, on the proud tops

Of brimming tankards, I never more shall see—(a pause)

Hard—Hard fate!”

is to be spoken in a canine and snappish mode, like “Darkness, Darkness,” in *Richard the Third*.

“—O sure it was not so much

“To mean to build a scone.”—

Mournful reflection!

“—But the heavens are just!”

Here he is to look wistfully and repentantly towards heaven, then a stammer,

“I—I—I.”—

“As half of the last I--- (O has reigned long enough for the other vowels to take their turn) is pronounced, he is to have the rattles in his throat, which are to be accompanied by the wish abrupt, the half screw, two kicks, and the flop supine, equivalent to the sailors’ phrase (“Good night, Nicholas!”) when they are going to the bottom.”

DR. FORD.—There was a Dr. Ford who was intimate with Garrick, and many men of rank. The doctor was occasionally the butt of the company, but now and then endeavoured to turn the laugh against them, not without success. One day, when the party was met together, after dinner, Lord Monson began to sharpen his wit upon him:—“Why, doctor, you look

so rosy, it does a man good to see you.”—“Nay, my lord, not so rosy as you.”—“O, doctor, that is only a reflection from your face.”—“Why then, my lord, I am glad to have supplied your lordship with the first reflection you ever made in your life.” His lordship had not another word to say. Garrick then took him up, and after rallying him severely, seeing him a little too sore, clapped him on the back, “Come, come, doctor, don’t be offended, you know me.”—“Yes, well enough,” said the doctor, “and so may any fool for a shilling.” The doctor rode a horse which he wanted to get rid of;—the company agreed to raffle for him;—he was valued at twenty guineas, which were immediately subscribed;—the doctor had a share also, and, on casting lots, he won the horse himself, and rode home, after having silenced the wits, with nineteen guineas in his pocket.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We shall be glad to see some of *Thalia’s* “Anecdotes,” if possessed of any novelty.—*Albumania* we trust will favour us with another communication.—D’s Poem has some good lines and some bad ones: if he will amend the latter, the piece shall appear.—We perfectly appreciate the feeling which called forth the remonstrance of *Carolus*, and deem ourselves obliged to him for his candour.—The whole of the pieces in the last packet of *Curiosus* shall appear.—“Bill Jones” in a week or two.—We thank W. T. Evans, but his “Acrostics” don’t exactly suit us.—*Sic Sic’s* Conundrums are long.—*Clio* is referred to a notice in No. 31 respecting explanatory replies.

RECEIVED: J. Grange, Nemo, Rex, T. G., Lamech, Frisk, N. G. O., Tartar, T. S. Cooke, R. C. D., T. G.—I. Kitty, Apollo, Parnassus, Geneso Sarto, and *Clio* (5).

REJECTED: Leporello, T. R. R., Simon, and Brevitas.

ERRATA. P. 267, col. 1. line 16, for 285 read 313. P. 281, col. 1, read “feel it incumbent.”

THE NIG-NAG

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 41.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6th 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it." —SHAKESPEARE.



THE LEFT-HANDED DUEL.

FROM AN AMERICAN NEWSPAPER, WITH WHICH WE HAVE BEEN FAVOURED BY OUR FRIEND CLIO, WE HAVE COPIED THE ABOVE PRINT, NOT FOR ANY REMARKABLE HUMOUR OR CLEVERNESS IT DISPLAYS, BUT TO GIVE OUR READERS SOME IDEA OF THE TEMPER AND MANNER IN WHICH DUELS ARE CONDUCTED AMONGST OUR TRANS-ATLANTIC BRETHREN. THE PARTIES REPRESENTED ARE A COLONEL CUMMING AND A MR. MC DUFFIE, MEMBER OF CONGRESS, WHOSE HOSTILITIES WERE PRODUCTIVE OF MUCH AMUSEMENT LAST AUTUMN THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES. THE FOLLOWING EXTRACT FROM A LETTER WHICH APPEARED IN THE "NEW-YORK DAILY ADVERTISER" OF OCTOBER 24, WILL SERVE TO EXPLAIN SOME OF THE RIDICULOUS FEATURES WHICH DISTINGUISHED THEIR MEETING:—

"In the fight between the combatants, one, in the first instance, charged the other, with having made use of lutestring to ward off the ball, and in the second, with having adopted a species of shield, which I believe to be perfectly new, and before this time unheard of, to wit, bathing the body with a strong decoction of red oak bark. To shew that this is fact, I will produce the best evidence the nature of the case admits of, viz: the following article from a Georgia paper.

'THE DUEL.

'From the Augusta Chronicle and Advertiser.

'Will Mr. Mc Duffie have the effrontery to deny, that on the 8th of June, in addition to the use of lute-string, he employed a strong decoction of red oak bark, to harden his back? The result of my shot gives me the strongest reason to suspect that such was the fact. Besides, I have frequently heard it said, and indeed the report was pretty current, that he used this decoction habitually for the express purpose of rendering his body bullet-proof. I have heard that a friend in attempting to justify his recent refusal to back into a fight (according to his mode), observed that Mr. Mc Duffie could not meet me after the 4th of September, because he felt his skin growing tender, having exhausted his supply of this hardening liquid.

'I do not, however, make a positive charge. I put it in the form of a query, indicating to be sure my own decided opinion, but with the obvious view, that Mr. Mc Duffie may deny the fact if unfounded; and with the certain expectation that it will lead to a disclosure of the truth. If I am

wrong candour and justice will require me to state, that I do not believe Mr. Mc Duffie did use red oak bark; and I add, that it will give me as much pleasure to confess my mistake in this matter, as if Mr. Mc Duffie were not rather the paltriest fellow between Pedee and Savannah rivers.

'I withhold the evidence of particulars at present, as I am waiting for Mr. Mc Duffie to prove the existence of a pretty current report concerning my use of opium, and the declaration of any friend of mine, that he ever believed me to have used that article.

'WM. GUMMING.'

What are the peculiar properties of red oak bark, I do not know, but as oak bark is extensively used for tanning hides, it must have been with reference to this kind of superficial security that it was supposed to be used in this instance. Now, if toughening a man's skin by this decoction would turn aside a pistol ball, it would create a strong degree of courage, which is the same thing as bravery, and as the effects of the lotion would not be felt beyond the skin, so the courage excited by its use would stop there also; and therefore this species of bravery is only skin deep. I am particularly solicitous to establish this point logically, because it is one on which strangers to the code and principles of the science of duelling shall have advanced a little further, and a mode of currying hides as well as tanning them, shall be hit upon, the security will be as much more complete, as sole leather is more impervious to bullets than calf skins.

Thirdly, duelling secures the observance of good manners. And fortunately the case so often referred to proves this point also. For example—One of the parties is a Colonel, the other a Member of Congress—offices which necessarily imply a knowledge of good breeding. I shall now notice the various specimens of good manners exhibited by these two gentlemen before the first fight. The effects of it are enough to establish my proposition; especially as the effect is what we are after. One champion charges

the other with using Cologne water to keep up his courage—the other retorts by charging the first with bathing his skin in a decoction of red oak bark. One accuses the other with exhibiting cadaverous looks, a feeble whine, a humble crawling over the field—with having obtained the 'sublime of impudence,' (which is known to be the highest point of good breeding) with being a 'bloody minded savage,' a 'lutestring knight,' an 'equivocating scoundrel and base coward,' &c. &c.—His antagonist pays this debt honourably, and with interest, by epithets and implications of equal magnitude, and which presuppose the same knowledge of polished and refined manners. Now what can be more certain than this, that when language like this is used by men of understanding in the community, even after a duel has taken place between them, that without the aid of that refiner of manners, they would have been terrible coarse, rough, unpolished boors and clowns.

"VINDICATOR."

A few days after, the editor of the paper favoured his readers with a poetical version of the story, from which we give a few extracts:—

And now each champion takes his ground;

Defiance fills the fields around:
With nicest care the lines are trac'd,
The distance with precision pac'd,
The weapons take the deadly ball,
And a deep pause precedes their fall,
As a soft prelude to the trial,
Our hero takes the magic phial,
And as the bolt of vengeance lingers,
Pours the libation o'er his fingers,
And takes a snuff—Swift from his frame
Flies every twinge of fear and shame;
His courage comes, relumes his vigour,
And feels his touch the nice hair trigger,
While near at hand his raging foe,
In lutestring sheath'd, awaits the blow.
What clouds portentous wrap the sky!
What angry tempests gather nigh!
While, 'mid the terrors of the storm,
Lowers with dread frown Fate's awful form.

And now the fatal word is given—
"Fire!" echoes thro' the vault of heaven.
The bullet flies—a shocking thump,
Short space above the "Member's"
rump,

Brings down the trembling hero plump.
Finding himself all safe and sound,
The Colonel raves like bull-dog round,
Swears he will have another shot,
And drive the gentleman "to pot;"
But all in vain—his fallen foe
Declares "to pot" he will not go—
That honour's laws can ne'er demand
A man shall fight who cannot stand;
That no one but the merest nobby
Could want two shot-holes thro' his body,
When one, however his friend might
wonder,

Was more than he could well stand under.
The Colonel chaf'd like wounded boar,
One moment rav'd; another swore;
Branded his foe, now lost to shame,
With every foul opprobrious name—
A "coward," "scoundrel," "lutestring
knight,"

"A red-oak bark decocted" wight—
A twisting, dodging, thin-edged loon,
Shapeless as phantom of the moon—
While tavern walls with scandal glow,
And capitals in hand-bills shew.
Not long the wounded member lingers,
But with the earliest use of fingers,
Seizes his pen, and in a pet,
Doubly repays bright honour's debt;—
Describes his foe a thirst for slaughter,
Bracing his nerves with "Cologne Wa-
ter;"

But, as his stomach's tone grew slacker,
As "chewing Opium" for tobacco;—
Then tenders on some public post,
Interest, and principal, and cost.

Things now assume a wayward course,
The hostile powers grow worse and
worse,

Seconds in angry conflicts join,
And surgeons fire thro'out the line,
And e'en the apothecary's skill,
Directs the bolus and the pill,
While the fierce combatants engage
In warfare fresh with deadliest rage.—
Meetings are fix'd, the place agreed,
Thither the champions hie with speed.
All things for combat seem prepar'd,
And each bold breast for battle bar'd,
When something happens—just to save
These heroes from a timeless grave—
Tho' things have gone so great a length,
One wishes time, the other strength,
The road is bad, a rainy day,
The tavern stands too far away,
All turns out wrong,—the Colonel's
breath

Is short—he pants, but not for death;
His hand's unsteady, and who knows
But he in turn may wound his toes;—
And, as the last and only hope.
The posse come to "take them up."

All sublimary things must end,—
Foe must quit foe, and friend leave
friend;

The duellists desert the field,
The laws of honour be repeal'd—
This drama too must have its close,
The actors find at last repose;
In act the fourth it comes to pass,
Half-way 'twixt tragedy and farce;
After vain shots at least a batch.
The Member's elbow got a scratch,
Which by a gentle draught of blood,
Fulfill'd the claim of honour's code,
And wash'd out every former trace
Of shame, dishonour, and disgrace.
Rous'd from their deep and frightful
dream

The warriors saw the trickling stream,
And, as the crimson torrent gush'd,
In transports to each other rush'd.
Rejoic'd to make an end of strife,
Each, as the lawyers say "in life."
And in an ecstasy of joy,
Accents of warmest love employ,
Give up the use of steel and flint,
And scrape their cotton shirts for lint,
Their vengeance to the wild winds fling,
Draw up the elbow in a sling,
And spite of what the vulgar think,
March off like friends and take a drink.

This silly business was wound up
by the following paragraph printed
in the "Baltimore Gazette:"

"CUMMING and M'DUFFIE.—It
appears by the Savannah Georgian
that these two worthies, returned
home after posting each other at
Greenville. On Col Cumming's arri-
val at Augusta, he again posted Mr.
M'Duffie, and added a promise of
producing to the public a full view
of the transaction. [The editors of
the Gazette have copies of the post-
ings at Greenville, but they are too
low for insertion. The curious can
see them by calling at the office.]"

THE COMFORTER,

(FROM VOLTAIRE)

Altho' we know that tears are vain,
That death nor heeds, nor hears dis-
tress —

Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou—who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

BYRON.

The great philosopher Citofile, said
one day to a lady in affliction, and

who had much reason to be so, "Madam, the Queen of England, daughter of the great Henry IV, was as miserable as you: she was driven out of her kingdom; she had liked to have been shipwrecked; and she saw her royal consort beheaded on a scaffold." "I am truly sorry for her," said the lady, and continued to bewail her own misfortunes.

"But," resumed Citofile, "recollect Mary Stuart; she was honourably in love with a gallant musician, who had an excellent bass voice. Her husband killed the musician before her face; and afterwards her good friend and relation Queen Elizabeth, who called herself a virgin, caused her head to be cut off on a scaffold hung with black, after having kept her in prison eighteen years.

"That was very cruel," replied the lady, and immediately relapsed into her melancholy.

"You have heard perhaps," said the Comforter, "of the beautiful Joan of Naples, who was apprehended and strangled?"—"I have a confused idea of it," said the mourner.

"I must tell you," added the other, "the story of a queen, who, in my memory, was dethroned after supper, and died in a desert island."—"I know all that story," replied the lady.

"Well then, I must tell you what happened to another great princess, whom I instructed in philosophy. She, like all other great and beautiful princesses, had a lover: her father came into her chamber, and surprised the lover, whose face was all in a flame, and his eyes as red as carbuncles; the lady's complexion also was greatly heightened. The young man's looks so disgusted the father, that he saluted him with the most violent box on the ear which had ever been given in that province. The lover snatched up a pair of tongs, and broke his father-in-law's head, which with great difficulty was healed, and the scar caused by the wound is still visible.

"The distracted fair one jumped out of the window, and sprained her ankle, so that she is now somewhat lame, though, in other respects, her figure is admirable. The lover was con-

demned to be hanged for breaking the head of a very great prince: you may imagine the despair of the princess when her lover was led to the gallows. I saw her long after in prison, where her father had confined her:—she never spoke to me but of her misfortunes."

"Why then would you have me not think of mine?" said the lady.—"Because," replied the philosopher, "you ought not to think of them; and because so many great ladies having been miserable, it would ill become you to despair. Think of Hecuba, think of Niobe."—"Ah!" said the lady, "if I had lived in their time, or in that of so many beautiful princesses, and if, for their consolation you had related to them my misfortunes, do you think that they would have listened to you?"

The next day the philosopher lost his only son, and was nearly ready to die for grief. The lady drew up a list of all the kings who had lost their children, and carried it to the philosopher: he read it, found it very exact, and wept as much as before. Three months after they met again, and were astonished to find each other in excellent spirits. They erected a beautiful statue to Time, with this inscription,—To THE COMFORTER. *

THE MERCHANT & HIS DOG,

[We insert the subjoined article at the request of a correspondent. It has often been printed before, but the touching pathos of the narrative will compensate with every reader of sensibility for its want of novelty.]

A FRENCH merchant, having some money due from a correspondent, set out on horseback, accompanied by his dog, on purpose to receive it. Having settled the business to his satisfaction, he tied the bag of money before him, and began to return home. His faithful dog, as if he entered into his master's feelings, frisked round the horse, barked, and jumped, and seemed to participate in his joy.

The merchant, after riding some miles, alighted to repose himself under

an agreeable shade, and, taking the bag of money in his hand, laid it down by his side under a hedge, and, on remounting, forgot it. The dog perceived his lapse of recollection, and, wishing to rectify it, ran to fetch the bag, but it was too heavy for him to drag along. He then ran to his master, and, by crying, barking, and howling, endeavoured to remind him of his loss. The merchant understood not his language; but the assiduous creature preserved in its efforts, and, after trying in vain to stop the horse, at last began to bite its heels. The merchant, absorbed in some reverie, wholly overlooked the real object of his affectionate attendant's importunity, but waked to the alarming apprehension that he was gone mad. Full of this suspicion, in crossing a brook, he turned back to look if the dog would drink. The animal was too intent on its master's business to think of itself; it continued to bark and bite with greater violence than before.

"Mercy!" cried the afflicted merchant, "it must be so—my poor dog is certainly mad: what shall I do? I must kill him, lest some greater misfortune befall me; but with what regret! Oh, could I find any one to perform this cruel office for me! but there is no time to lose; I myself may become the victim, if I spare him."

With these words, he drew a pistol from his pocket, and, with a trembling hand, took aim at his faithful servant. He turned away in agony as he fired, but his aim was too sure. The poor animal falls wounded; and, weltering in his blood, still endeavours to crawl towards his master, as if to tax him with ingratitude. The merchant could not bear the sight; he spurred on his horse with a heart full of sorrow, and lamented he had taken a journey which had cost him so dear. Still, however, the money never entered his mind; he only thought of his poor dog, and tried to console himself with the reflection, that he had prevented a greater evil, by dispatching a mad animal, than he had suffered a calamity by his loss.—This opiate to his wounded spirit was in-

effectual. "I am most unfortunate," said he to himself, "I had almost rather have lost my money than my dog." Saying this, he stretched out his hand to grasp his treasure. It was missing, no bag was to be found. In an instant, he opened his eyes to his rashness and folly. "Wretch that I am! I alone am to blame! I could not comprehend the admonition which my innocent and most faithful friend gave me, and I have sacrificed him for his zeal. He only wished to inform me of mistake, and he has paid for his fidelity with life."

Instantly he turned his horse, and went off at full gallop to the place where he had stopped. He saw, with half averted eyes, the scene where the tragedy was acted; he perceived the traces of blood as he proceeded; he was oppressed and distracted: but in vain did he look for his dog—he was not to be seen on the road. At last he arrived at the spot where he had alighted. But what were his sensations! His heart was ready to bleed; he cursed himself in the madness of despair. The poor dog, unable to follow his dear, but cruel master, had determined to consecrate his last moments to his service. He had crawled, all bloody as he was, to the forgotten bag, and, in the agonies of death, he lay watching beside it. When he saw his master, he still testified his joy by the wagging of his tail—he could do no more—he tried to rise, but his strength was gone! The vital tide was ebbing fast; even the caresses of his master could not prolong his fate for a few moments. He stretched out his tongue to lick the hand that was now fondling him in the agonies of regret, as if to seal forgiveness for the deed that had deprived him of life. He then cast a look of kindness on his master, and closed his eyes for ever.

J. W. GRANGE.

Interesting Varieties.

● SINGULAR INTREPIDITY.

A SINGULAR instance of intrepidity took place at Agoda, near Goa, on

the 21st of March, 1809. Early in the morning, a report was received at the cantonments, that a large tiger had been seen on the rocks near the sea. About nine o'clock, a number of officers and men assembled at the spot where it had been seen, when, after some search, the animal was discovered in the recess of an immense rock; dogs were sent in, in the hopes of starting him, but without effect; they having returned with several wounds.

Lieutenant Evan Davis, of the 7th regiment, attempted to enter the den, but was obliged to return, finding the passage extremely narrow and dark. He, however, attempted a second time, with a pick axe in his hand, with which he removed some obstructions that were in the way, and having proceeded a few yards, he heard a noise which he conceived to be that of the animal in question. He then returned, and communicated this to Lieutenant Threw of the Artillery, who also went in the same distance, and was of a similar opinion. What course to pursue was doubtful; some proposed to blow up the rock, others to smoke him out. At length a port-fire was tied to the end of a bamboo, and introduced into a small crevice which led towards the den. Lieutenant Davis went on his hands and knees down the narrow passage (which he accomplished with imminent danger to himself) and by the light was enabled to discover the animal; having returned, he said he could kill him with a pistol; which being procured, he entered again, and fired, but without success, owing to the awkward situation he was then placed in, with his left hand only at liberty. He went back with a musket and bayonet, and wounded him in the loins, but was obliged to retreat as quick as the narrow passage would admit; the tiger having forced the musket back towards the mouth of the den. He then procured a rifle, with which he again forced his way into the place, and taking a deliberate aim at the animal's head, fired, and put an end to its existence.

Another difficulty now presented it-

self; for how to get it out required some consideration. Ropes were procured, but every attempt to reach it proved fruitless, till Lieutenant Davis, with a pick-axe in his hand, cut his way into the den, and got sufficiently near to fasten a strong rope round its neck, by which it was dragged out to the no small satisfaction of a numerous crowd of anxious spectators.

It measured seven feet and a half from the nose to the tail.

J. J.

CHOICE RECEIPTS.

MR. EDITOR,—As I perceive you occasionally insert receipts of various kinds, you will perhaps find room for a few extracts from the queer work, the title of which is subjoined:—

“The Queen-like Closet; or, Rich Cabinet: stored with all manner of Rare Receipts for Preserving, Candying, and Cookery. Very pleasant and beneficial to all ingenious persons of the female sex. To which is added a Supplement; or, a little of every thing; presented to all ingenious ladies and gentlewomen. By Hannah Woolley. London. Printed by T. R. for Richard Lownds; and are to be sold at the sign of the White Lion in Duck Lane, near West Smithfield, 1674.”

This is a most curious performance, and serves to place in a strong point of view the extent of the ignorance, prejudice, and superstition, which prevailed at the time of its publication. If the physical prescriptions it contains were ever followed, the loss of numberless lives must have been the consequence; many of these are so absurd that it is impossible to suppress laughter at the folly which dictated them, and the still greater folly which could be persuaded to make trial of them. Others are inexpressibly filthy. A few extracts from the various parts of the work will serve to shew the nature of it more fully. I commence with a few receipts, which prove that humanity was by no means among the list of Mrs. Hannah Woolley's virtues:—

"To make Cock-water for Consumptions. Take a Red Cock; pluck him alive; then slit him down the back, and take out his entrails; cut him in quarters, and bruise him in a mortar, with his head, legs, heart, liver, gizzard, &c. &c." p. 11.

"To make Snail Water. Take a peck of Snails, with the shells on their backs; have in readiness a good fire of charcoal well kindled, make a hole in the midst of the fire, and cast your snails into it, &c. &c." p. 17.

"For the Shingles. Take a Cat, and cut off her ears and her tail, and mix the blood thereof with a little new milk, and anoint the grieved place with it, morning and evening for three days." p. 47.

"To roast Lobsters. Take two fair lobsters alive; wash them clean, and stop the holes as you do to boil; then fasten them to a spit, the insides together; make a good fire, and strew salt on them, and that will kill them quickly, &c." p. 227.

These will be sufficient to shew that the lady's feelings were not particularly delicate; and the subjoined will as plainly evince that her cleanliness by no means abounded:—

"For the Leprosy. Swallow every twelve hours a bullet of gold, and still as you void one, wash it in treacle-water, and at the hour swallow it again; continue doing this a long time, and it will cure." p. 23.

For Morpew or Freckles. Take the blood of any fowl or beast, and wipe your face all over with it every night when you go to bed, for a fortnight together; and sometimes hold your face over the smoke of brimstone for a while." p. 66.

"To dry Tongues. Dry-salt them with bay-salt beaten small, till they are as hard as may be; then hang them in the chimney till they are very dry. When you would eat them, boil them with — in the pot, as well as water, for that will make them look black, and eat tender, and look red within." p. 202.

Let my readers think of this last

receipt the next time they regale themselves with a slice of tongue, and feel inclined to admire its delightful redness. One extract more, and I have done; I only quote it for the sake of proposing the correction of an erratum which appears to have crept into it towards the conclusion: it strikes me that if the word **AND** were substituted for that of **OR**, it would materially improve the sense of the passage:—

"To make Pudding of Plumb-Cake. Slice your Cake into some cream or milk, and boil it, and when it is cold, put in eggs, sugar, a little salt, and some marrow; so butter a pan, and bake it, or fill guts with it." p. 146.

Thus end my extracts from Mrs. Hannah Woolley. Much other curious matter might be transcribed, but my patience is exhausted. Should, however, any lady or gentleman feel desirous of perusing more of these notable receipts, I shall very willingly make them a present of the book from whence the above are taken, upon their signifying their wish to me through the publisher of the "**NIC-NAC**."

K.

THEATRICAL LOVE-EPISTLE.

DEAR MISS.—I am inclined to think you "Know Your Own Mind" when you say, Marriage is "What We must All Come to;" yet I fear your proposal of a "Clandestine Marriage" may lead us into a "Comedy of Errors;" which might conclude with "All in the Wrong;" and the "Discovery" might serve some people for a "Winter's Tale." This thought should be a "School for Lovers;" and your "Guardian" and "Brothers" would make "The Devil to Pay," as they always declared I should prove "The Suspicious Husband." I confess I should not like "The Taming of the Shrew," if you proved the "Jealous Wife;" yet I am the "Conscious Lover," and ready to agree to "What you Will;" so let it be "As you Like it." Yet, after we are "Man and Wife," I should be sorry to have it said "The Deuce is

in Him;" for were you to have the "Spirit of Contradiction," we should play at "Cross Purposes," and "Three Weeks after Marriage" the world would say, here is "A Wife to be Let." You know, Miss, "The Way of the World;"—"A Trip to Scotland" they would say was "Love's Last Shift;" but ("A Word to the Wise") you may communicate this to your "Duenna," who will inform you that "The School for Wives" is better than "The School for Scandal." "The Double Dealer" is a very bad character, and it would be a "Wonder" if I was not deemed an "Hypocrite" and you a "Runaway" by this "Elopement;" to avoid which, I shall immediately quit "Love in a Village," and pursue "A Journey to London;" so I leave you to compose yourself at the "Boarding School," with "Much ado about Nothing," hoping that you will consider "All's Well that Ends Well," and shun "The Road to Ruin," and learn "The Way to get Married."

August, 1823.

ROMEO."

QUERY.

SIR,—In the account of the Massacre of the Gardikiotes, which you have given at p. 307, it is said that "some of them becoming desperate, took up stones, with which they wounded several of the soldiers employed in their destruction;" yet a few lines before we read, that they were "tied together with cords, to prevent the efforts that might be suggested by despair." How are we to reconcile this apparent contradiction?

August 23.

SHELDON.

[We refer our correspondent to Dr. Holland, from whose work we transcribed the article.]

ED.

BRANDY.

BRANDY it is very probable, was not known in this country before the year 1642; yet the nurse in Romeo and Juliet, calls for it again, under the name of aquavita.

"Some aquavita! ho my lord! my lady!"

It appears to have been chiefly used in those days for medical purposes. During Captain Wyndham's voyage to Guinea, there was brandy on board, for the use of the sick sailors. It is said to have been invented by Raymundus Lullius the famous alchemist, who died in the year 1315. Charles the Bad, King of Navarre, came to a most horrible end, says Mezeray, who, to restore his strength weakened by debauchery, was wrapped in sheets steeped in *EAU DE VIE*. His valet by accident set fire to them; and after the third day he died in the most dreadful tortures, thus it is to be hoped expiating the crimes of his most execrable life.*

PARNASSUS.

* Vide "Nic-Nac," No. 17, page 143.

The Wit's Nunchion.

MR. N. was on bad terms with his wife, and his eldest son was by no means a favourite; for when he paid a visit to his father, the old gentleman turned to a friend, and said, "Now you shall see me kill two birds with one stone. William, go and tell your mother, from me, you are a son of a b——h."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We hope to find a place for Genoa Sarto's "Epigram." Why will Leporello persevere in making himself appear ridiculous?—We shall shortly resume the "Trans-atlantic Varieties," "Magazine Gleanings," "American Muse," and "Poetry and Poets." A private reply will be given to the communication from Devizes. Several unpaid letters from the country have been returned to the Post Office.

To Nimrod "Yes."

RECEIVED.—Marall, B. S., George Moore, Periam, Sylvanus, T. T., A Constant Reader, R., Ivan, Smith, Senex, R. T. P., Nemo, G., and Albumania.

REJECTED.—T. G., Mabel, O. G., Sator, A Foundling, G. G. and Z.

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

NO. 42.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise be as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till it crown us."—SHAKESPEARE.



DUKE'S THEATRE, DORSET GARDENS.

THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE, SECTION 12.—The causes which principally led to a junction of the King's and Duke's Companies, have already been described; but it is necessary that we should retrograde a little in our narrative, in order to mention a most disastrous event which befel the King's Company some time previous. This was no less than the complete demolition of their

house by fire, in January, 1672, when not only the theatre, but between fifty and sixty adjoining buildings were entirely destroyed. It is remarkable that upon this occasion a BRIEF was read throughout the kingdom for the benefit of the sufferers. In the register of Symondsbury, in the county of Dorset, is the following entry:—"1673, April 27, Collected by brief, for the Theatre Royal in London

being burnt, the sum of TWO SHILLINGS! John Way, Curate; James Morey and George Seal, Churchwardens."

Whither the company removed after this accident, is somewhat doubtful; but it seems very probable that the house in Bear Yard, Clare Market, which has been described in Sec. 10, was their place of refuge during the period which elapsed between the burning of the old theatre, and the erection of a new one. This was undertaken by the proprietors with all convenient speed; and a mark of their taste and judgment was evinced in the selection of Sir Christopher Wren to form a design for their new house, and to superintend the execution of it. Sir Christopher consequently produced a plan, which, according to tradition, was admirably calculated for the advantage both of the actors and spectators; but this underwent so many injudicious alterations, as to defeat the intention of the architect, and spoil the building.

It was opened on the 26th March, 1674, when a prologue and epilogue, both written by Dryden, were spoken, the principal object of which appears to have been to apologize for the plainness and absence of ornament in the house, compared with the splendid edifice erected by the Duke's Company in Dorset Gardens. The apology, however, was ineffective, for sound and show carried all before them; and spite of the attempts of the King's Company to ridicule the showy productions of their rivals, the Duke's continued to attract crowded audiences, whilst the King's pined in neglect; but, as we have before observed, the immense expenditure of the former exceeded even their great receipts; and for the preservation of both companies from utter ruin, it was found indispensable to bring about the junction mentioned in Sec. 11. This event appears to have been hastened on the part of the King's by the defection of two of their principal members, Hart and Kynaston, who had accepted engagements at the other house; and the

proceeding was also recommended by Royalty, which, under all circumstances, amounted to a command.

The sanguine expectations of advantage which this junction excited, appear to have ended in disappointment. Both the patentees and the performers found their profits scarcely, if at all, increased; the former therefore quickly relinquished their interest in the theatre to new adventurers; and, after passing through several hands, the principal part of the property, in the year 1690, fell into those of one Christopher Rich, a lawyer, whose name bears a distinguished station in the subsequent history of the stage. This man, who was by no means calculated for the management of a theatre, quickly disgusted the performers by his insolence and tyranny; and his wanton oppressions at length provoked the principal of them to aim at erecting themselves in a separate company. They accordingly found means to gain a licence from King William for this purpose; and having fitted up the house in Bear Yard, Clare Market, the seceders, at the head of whom were Betterton and Mrs. Bracegirdle, commenced their operations on the 30th of April, 1695, with Congreve's "Love for Love," which met with extraordinary success, and was repeatedly performed during the whole season.

Some idea of the internal appearance of the theatres at this period may be formed from the accompanying wood-cut, copied from one of the scene-prints which decorate Elkanah Settle's "Empress of Morocco," representing the stage of the Duke's Theatre, where this tragedy was performed. The figures on the stage are Muly Labas, son to the Emperor of Morocco, and Morena, his beloved. As copies of this famous play are scarce, and, with the plates, sell for about a guinea and a half each, our readers may perhaps feel interested by a specimen of the high-sounding verse in which it is written. We give part of the dialogue which takes place between the two personages just mentioned:—

"ACT I.—SCENE I.

"Scene opens. Muly Labas appears, bound in Chains, attended by Guards.

"MULY. Condemn'd to fetters, and to sceptres born,
'Tis in this garb unhappy princes mourn.
Yet fortune to great courages is kind;
'Tis he wants liberty whose soul's confin'd.

My thoughts outfly that mighty conqueror,

Who, having one world vanquish'd, wept for more:

Fetter'd in empires, he enlargement crav'd,

To the short walk of one poor globe enslav'd.

My soul mounts higher, and fate's pow'r disdains,

And makes me reign a monarch in my chains.

But 'tis my father has decreed my fate,
Yet still he shews his greatness in his hate.

Thy rage, brave prince, mean subjects doth despise;

None but thy son shall be thy sacrifice.

"ENTER MORENA, BOUND.

"This dazzling object my weak sight invades;

Such beauty would make dungeons lose their shades.

"MORENA. Remember, sir, when first you were a guest

To Taffaletta's Court, and to my breast,

That I, fond woman, in a borrow'd shape,

Was a conspirator in my own rape.

When in a fatal night, whose darkness did

Both our escapes and my faint blushes hide,

With you I fled my country, left a crown,

Heir only now t'an unkind father's frown;
And now, for refuge to Morocco come,
We in your father's court receive this doom."

Five long acts of such stuff might be thought too much even for the strongest stomach. Yet this was acted at court by peers and peeresses; had prologues written for it by Lords Rochester and Mulgrave; excited the bitterest envy and animosity in Dryden, Shadwell, and Crowne; and was defended by the Duke of Buckingham and others. Such is the force of party and prejudice. Yet its very name would be now almost forgotten, were it not for the immortality con-

ferred upon it by Johnson, who has introduced an account of it in his life of Dryden.—(Resumed at p. 353.)

[We have had several letters addressed to us this week, on the subject of a direct variation which occurs between our account of the Theatre in Bear-Yard, given at p. 265, and an article upon the same subject which appeared in the last number of the "Mirror." The fact is, that the editor of the latter work has been misled by a gross blunder of the "Londina Illustrata," from which he derived his materials, and has confounded the Theatre in Bear-Yard with that in Portugal Street (now Spode and Copeland's Staffordshire warehouse), a view of which will accompany our 13th Section. The publisher of the "Londina Illustrata," on detecting the error, cancelled the defective sheet and one of the plates, but a faulty copy having fallen into the hands of the editor of the "Mirror," has led him into the above mistake. We notice this, not from any fondness for exposing the lapses of our competitors, but merely to vindicate our own correctness. We must, however, remark that the "Mirror" falls into another ludicrous blunder, instyling the Theatre in Bear-Yard the first built after the REFORMATION, having just before told us that there were seventeen play-houses erected between 1570 and 1629.—We presume the RESTORATION is meant.

Ed.]

ANECDOTE OF A DOLPHIN.

SEVERAL curious stories are related of this fish, most of which are fabulous. That of Arion, whom a Dolphin, enchanted with the harmonious strains of his lyre, saved from drowning, is well known, but it is rather an instructing allegory, than a well-grounded fact. However, this fish has obtained the reputation of being particularly fond of man, from the following interesting anecdote, related by Pliny the younger, who does not appear to have had any doubt of its being true: it is as follows:—"There is in Africa a town called Hippo, situated not far from the sea-coast; it stands upon a navigable

lake, from whence a river runs into the sea, and ebbs and flows with the tide. Persons of all ages divert themselves there with fishing, sailing, or swimming, especially boys, whom love of play and idleness bring thither. The contest among them is, who shall have the glory of swimming farthest. It happened in one of those trials, that a certain boy, more bold than the rest, launched out towards the opposite shore, where he was met by a dolphin, which sometimes swam before him, and sometimes behind him; then played round him; and at last took him upon its back, then set him down, and afterwards took him up again, and thus carried the frightened boy out into the deepest part, when immediately it turned back again to the shore, and landed him among his companions. The fame of this remarkable event spread through the town, and crowds of people flocked round the boy to ask him questions, and hear his answers. The next day, the shore was lined with multitudes of spectators, all attentively contemplating the ocean. In the mean while, the boys swam as usual; and among the rest, the youth I am speaking of went into the lake, but with more caution than before. The dolphin again appeared, and came to the boy, who, together with his companions, swam away with great precipitation. The dolphin, as it were to invite and recal them, leaped and dived up and down, dashing about in a thousand different convolutions; this it practised for several days together, till the boys began to be ashamed of their timidity. They ventured therefore to advance nearer, playing with it, and calling it to them, while it returned, and suffered itself to be touched and stroked. Use rendered them more courageous; the boy in particular who had first encountered it, swam by the side of it, and leaping upon its back, was carried about in that manner. Thus they gradually became acquainted and delighted with each other. There seemed now indeed to be no fear on either side, the confidence of the one and the tameness of the other mutually increasing; the

rest of the boys, in the meanwhile, surrounding and encouraging their companion.

It is very remarkable that this dolphin was followed by a second, which seemed only a spectator or attendant on the former, for it did not submit to the same familiarities as the first, but only conducted it backwards and forwards, as the boys did their comrade. But, what is farther surprising, and no less true, is, that the dolphin which played with the boys, would come upon the shore, dry itself on the sand, and, as soon as it grew warm, roll back into the sea. Octavius, deputy governor of the province, actuated by an absurd superstition, poured some precious ointment over it, as it lay on the shore, the novelty and smell of which made it retire into the ocean, and it was not till after several days that it was seen again, when it appeared dull and languid. However it at length recovered its liveliness, and continued its usual playful tricks. All the magistrates round the country flocked thither to see the sight, the entertainment to whom, upon their arrival, and during their stay, was an expense which the slender finances of this community could ill afford; besides, the quietness and retirement of the place were utterly destroyed: it was thought proper therefore to remove the occasion of this concourse, by privately killing the poor dolphin. Many stories I have heard of this fish, but none I doubt the authenticity of so much as of this. (CAREY ST.—W.H. BADDAMS.)

ROMAN LADY'S TOILET:

ALTHOUGH the ancient authors are generally very minute in their account of Roman manners, yet they have neither furnished us with an account of the interior arrangements of the ladies' dressing rooms, nor such description of the separate part of their customary apparel, as to enable us to follow them through all the revolutions of fashion. The same desire to please which actuates the modern belle, no doubt influenced the Roman beauty; for time and place make no

other difference in a passion which has ever been the same, than in the manner of its display.

The Roman lady's dressing-table appears to have been provided with all its usual appendages, except that useful little modern instrument—the pin. But its inseparable ornament the mirror, did not possess the advantage of being formed of glass, but of polished metal.

No other head-dress was worn than the hair variously arranged and ornamented, except, indeed, that at one time, a cap, in the form of a mitre, was in fashion, but it soon fell into disuse. The most usual way was to plait the hair, and roll it as a bandeau round the head, on the crown of which it was fastened in a knot; and it became fashionable to raise these tresses upon each other, until they were reared into a kind of edifice of many stages, where

“With curls on curls, like different stories rise,
Her towering locks, a structure to the skies.”

The fashion of wearing false hair was not unknown to the Roman ladies, who went so far as to improve the mode into a wig, which was at one time dressed in imitation of a military casque. The curls were confined with small chains, or rings of gold, and bodkins studded with precious stones. Fillets of purple or white riband, ornamented with pearls, were also worn on the head, and splendid jewels in the ears. There were some decorations for the head which were considered peculiarly indicative of female decorum; such was a plain broad riband, with which some matrons tressed their hair; others appertained exclusively to particular families; but it is probable that these distinctions were soon lost, or confounded in the maze of fashion.

The Roman ladies were extremely careful of their teeth and their eyes. Art had not indeed, then arrived at the perfection of supplying the absolute deficiency of an eye; but means were not wanting to increase their lustre, and to make those which were small or sunk, appear larger and

more prominent than they really were. This was effected by burning the powder of antimony, the vapour of which being allowed to ascend to the eyes, had the effect of distending the eyelids; or the powder, and sometimes, indeed common soot, was gently spread with a bodkin underneath the lid, and the tint which it imparted was supposed to give an expression of liquid softness to the eye. Penciling the eyebrows was a constant practice; nor was there any ignorance of the effect produced by a skillfully disposed patch, or of any other of the numerous arcana by which the charms of the person are heightened and displayed.

It has been doubted whether the Roman ladies did actually employ the “artillery of patches.” But not only are they repeatedly mentioned in Martial's Epigrams, but the younger Pliny tells us, that even a grave lawyer had recourse to their aid, and that according as he was to plead for plaintiff or defendant, he used to wear a white or a black patch, over the right or the left eye!

ORTHOGRAPHY.

MR. EDITOR.—Observing that you occasionally give some choice specimens of orthography, it is not unlikely but the enclosed, selected from some old papers I have by me, may be found worthy of insertion.

ALBEMANIA.

A LITERAL TRANSCRIPT OF A LETTER RECEIVED AT THE PUBLIC OFFICE, BOW-STREET, FROM THE MAYOR OF A CORPORATE TOWN IN WILTSHIRE.

“To the Most Publikest Office in all Bow Strete, Lundun.

“SIR,—This here his to let you to know, that I ave taken hup, by Vertue of my Power hand Suvrainety, three Parsons on a terrable suspishon of beeing bagabones. Too hof em I myself ave seen lightering habout our church, hintendin to kommit a burgleary; the tother we beleave has been gilty hof bigomy, hor some hother bludthusty hact, he aving a very hill luke with im; hif you will let me know hoo they am, hor wat

they am, I will Persecute em accordin to law, hand the axe o' Parlement hin that kase maid hand Purvidid.

J. B., MARE.

"N. B.—Sur,—Hanother broke loos, hand run haway; He His marked with the Small Pocks Hin is face, wears Is Hown aire, tyd beeind, and I never seed a moor wusser lukiug young Youth with my two Hyes. He was booted and spurred; Hif He Am hin yure town, take im hup by Horder o' me, hand confyne im hin is Majestie's jale of Noogate, till I ears furdur."

Interesting Varieties.

MEMORANDA METROPOLITANA.

FEW things are more amusing to an inhabitant of London, than to trace on an old map the astonishing increase which during the last hundred years has been made in its size, in every quarter. In works written when the town had not attained to half its present dimensions, we frequently meet with lamentations over its immense bulk, and forebodings that some sad disaster must be the result of having the head so much too large for the body; but we have not seen that such prophecies have been accomplished. In the "London Magazine" for 1734, is a paper entitled a "Review of the Public Buildings," in which these complaints are carried to a great length; but what would the writer have said had he lived in our days? It is curious to compare his description of several well-known parts of London, with their present state—e. g.—

"Great Ormond Street is a place of pleasure; and that side of it next the fields is one of the most charming situations about town.

"Queen's Square is an area of a peculiar kind, being left open on one side, for the sake of the beautiful landscape, which is formed by the hills of Highgate and Hampstead, together with the adjacent fields."

"Southampton Row seems to have been built for the sake of the pros-

pect before it; and for that, no situation can be more happy.

"From Hanover Square we cross the road to Oxford or Cavendish Square; I am uncertain by which of these names 'tis most properly distinguished. Here it is the modern rage for builing was first stayed; and I think the rude, unfinished figure of the project should deter others from a like infatuation."

BEN JONSON.—In breaking the ground last week in the north aisle of Westminster Abbey, to prepare the grave of Lady Wilson, the coffin of Ben Jonson was discovered, in a perpendicular position; the skeleton within it was placed with the head downwards, and though perfect and entire, crumbled into dust immediately on being exposed to the air. These interesting remains, it is hardly necessary to say, were carefully replaced in their original repository, which is close to the foot of the grave already alluded to, and near the monument of the late Mr. Perceval.—("Times," Sep. 2.)

CHESHIRE PROVERB.—"Better wed over the midden than over the moor," is a common saying in Cheshire. The word midden is a provincial term for the dung-heap in a farm-yard, while the road from Chester to London is over the Moorlands of Staffordshire. This local proverb affords a curious exemplification of country pride, or perhaps wisdom, as its aim evidently is to persuade the gentry of the county to form intermarriages among their own families and connections, and thus perpetuate ancient friendships amongst them.

PROFANE SWEARING.—Among the vices which fashion has too great a share in encouraging, none is of worse example, or less excusable, than that of profane swearing, or the practice of interlarding one's conversation on all occasions, even the most trifling, with appeals to the Deity. A general officer, who is a living and illustrious example of the perfect compatibility of the most gentlemanly

manners with the strictest purity of language, but who was in early life much addicted to this fashionable sin, dates his reformation from a memorable reproof which he accidentally received when a young man, from an eccentric Scottish clergyman, settled in the north of England. While stationed with his regiment at Newcastle, he had the misfortune, one evening, to get involved in a street brawl with some persons of the lower order; and the dispute, as is too usual in such cases, was carried on with an abundance of audacious oaths on both sides. The clergyman alluded to, passing by at the moment, and being much shocked at the imprecations which assailed his ears, stepped into the midst of the crowd, and, with his cane uplifted, thus gravely addressed one of the principal leaders of the rabble: "Oh, John, John, what's this now I hear? You, only a poor collier body, and swearing like any lord in a' the land! O, John, hae ye nae fear what will come o' you? It may do very well for this braw gentleman here," pointing to Lieutenant —, "to bang and swear as he pleases, but, John, it's no for you, or the like o' you, to tak in vain the name o' Him by whom you live and have your being." Then turning to the lieutenant, he continued, "Ye'll excuse the poor man, sir, for swearing; he's an ignorant body, and kens nae better." Lieutenant — slunk away, covered with confusion, and unable to make any answer; but next day he made it his business to find out his reverend monitor, and thank him for the wholesome reproof he had given him.

THE BACHELOR'S WIFE.

Without affectation, gay, youthful, and pretty;
Without pride or meanness; familiar and witty;
Without form, obliging, good natur'd and free;
Without art, as lovely as lovely can be:
Let her say what she thinks, and think what she says;
Regardless alike of both censure and praise;

Let her thoughts, and her words, and her actions be such,
That none can admire them or praise them too much
W. M.

CHANGE OF OPINION.

Whatever is, is right, says Pope,
So said a sturdy thief;
But when his neck receiv'd a rope,
He varied his belief.

I asked if still he held it good:
"Why no," he sternly cried;
"Good texts are only understood
By being well applied."

THALIA.

IMPROVIDENT WIT.

As Jack was trudging home from school,
Loaded with many a tiresome book,
In leathern bag,
Up to him steps, with cunning look,
A witty wag.
"Come, come, my learned blade," says he,
"I'll wage I'll tell as quick as thee,
That STULTI means a fool."
"Ah! say you so, sly chap?" says Jack,
"I'll prove the difference in a crack,
Without much bother:
STULTI means two fools,
You, sir, and your brother."

W. H. F.

DEBTOR AND CREDITOR.

"In vain your bill you forward thrust,
I still must claim delay;
But, very soon indeed, I trust
And hope the same to pay."

"Your trust and hope disturbs my mind,
If tarry still I must:
With aching heart, alas! I find,
'Tis I must hope and trust."

EPIGRAMS.

BEAUTY, an evanescent flower,
Cries Nigra, lives but for an hour;
Its charm too quickly ceases;
Oh, Nigra! thine's a happier fate,
And well our envy may create,
Thy ugliness each day INCREASES.

Marriage is certain happiness;
Since home, at least, is paradise,
If a wife a mortal bless
Young, and fond, and fair, and wise.

And, if she's ugly old, and cross,
To vice of ev'ry nature given,
Our gain, e'en then, exceeds our loss,
For, all the world save home, seems
heaven.

"Dulce est desipere in loco," cries his
grace,
'Tis charming sure, to play the fool in
place;
And so, adhering strictly to this rule,
He wisely gets IN PLACE, then PLAYS
THE FOOL.

THE SPHINX.

NO. V.

CHARADE.

ADDRESSED TO A LADY.

I.

Very few of my first, lovely Jane, have
you got,
Though my first might be proud to
have you,
To escape from my second will ne'er be
your lot,
So swiftly, alas! 'twill pursue.

When honour and sense in my whole
can be trac'd,
'Tis the noblest support of the Throne;
But, ah! we too frequently see it dis-
grac'd

By the vices to which it is prone!

II.

By the side of a stream, as it murmur-
ing flows,
My first in its primitive slenderness
grows.
My second's a blessing, received from on
high,
And we trace its bright influence each
day through the sky.
My whole, while the earth from the sun
turns away,
The night's gloom will cheer with a
glimmering ray.

PARADOX, BY A LADY.—"One sum-
mer evening, as I was walking in the
fields, I heard somebody behind me call-
ing out my name. I turned round, and
saw a friend of mine, at the distance of
400 yards, approaching to join me. We
each of us moved 200 yards, with our

faces towards the other, in a direct line
yet we were still 400 yards asunder. How
could this be?"

QUERY.—If I buy four peats for a
penny, and bring one to you, why do I
resemble a telescope?

ENIGMA.

My first for partner's a short term,
My next's a female, I affirm;
My third calls men to serve the king,
My whole should be a puzzling thing.

CONUNDRUMS.

1. If Falstaff had been musical, what in-
strument would he have played upon?
2. Why is Whitbread's browhouse like
a tavern frequented by Jews?
3. Why is the sunlike people of fashion?
4. Why is a milkman like a sailor?
5. Why does a snuff-box change its na-
ture, if kept for a hundred years?
6. What is that which fastens two people
together yet touches only one of
them?
7. Why is a wench like a flounce?

(* * * Solutions to the above will be
found at page 351.)

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We refer George Nixon, Totam,
C. P., and Semel, to a note at the end
of the article on the English Stage, page
331. Albumania's Essay on Monosyl-
lables shall be inserted the very first op-
portunity. Several unpaid letters have
again been returned, a measure we are
compelled to adhere to. A reprint of
No. 9 is in the press. Some portions
of C. Brook's "Desultory Thoughts"
may perhaps find a place. We shall en-
deavour to give the cut recommended by
Memo. If V. V. will favour us with
her address, she shall hear from us.

RECEIVED.—T. Taylor, Susan, T. T.
Septimus, Benedick, P. Pope, "First
Love," T. G., (Manchester), Amabilis,
B. B. C., Chancery Lane, J., Pepin,
"Anecdote of a Spider," Teague, Clio,
etc. etc. etc.

A Letter has been left for K.

REJECTED.—Ivan, Nemo, and George
Moore.

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 43.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1823.

VOL. I.

"'Tis no use as we are tasted; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



A PERSEE BURIAL PLACE.

THIS curious print is copied from an engraving in Thomas Herbert's "Travels in divers parts of Asia and Afrique." Folio, 1638:—

The Persees are the descendants of these ancient Persians who were worshippers of fire. In Persia they have been almost exterminated by Mahometan fanaticism, but in India, to which country they fled for refuge from per-

secution, their numbers are still very great, particularly about Bombay and Surat, where they obtained permission from the Hindoos to exercise their religion without restraint, on condition that they should never kill an ox or a cow, which it is said they have sacredly observed.

Of the religious ceremonies of the Persees, which remain precisely the

same at the present day as they were two centuries ago, Herbert gives the subjoined curious particulars:—

“The baptism of these idolators is of this nature. So soon as a male child is born, the Daroo, or priest, is called upon, who being instructed in the precise time of its nativity, calculates its fortunes. He then suggests a name, which the mother imposes; and this done, they then proceed together to the temple, where the priest puts a little pure water into a vessel formed from the bark of a tree called Holm, which grows near Yezd, a city of Persia, and is said never to cast any shadow; the water out of this holy rind is poured upon the infant, and a prayer made that it may be cleansed from all impurity. At seven years of age, the boy is confirmed by the Daroo, and made to say his prayers over a fire (but with a cloth fastened over his mouth and nostrils, lest his sinful breath should taint the holy flame); drinks a little water, chews a pomgranate leaf, washes in a tank, clothes his naked body with a garment of fine linen, and ties a girdle of camel's hair about his loins, which he wears ever after. Then, after a short prayer, that he may never prove an apostate, eat no man's meat, nor drink any man's drink but his own, he is blessed, and considered a Persee.

“Their Marriage-Ceremony is as follows:—At midnight, the priest entering the house (for they wed not in churches), finds the parties upon a bed together, and two churchmen standing opposite, bearing in their hands rice, the emblem of fruitfulness. Then, one of them, laying his fore-finger on the bride's forehead, asks her if she is willing to take that man for her husband, who saying *yea*, the like question is by the other priest put to the man; the bridegroom promises to infeof her in a certain number of dynaes; she replies, that she (with all she has) is his property; the priests then scatter the rice on their heads, and pray that they may multiply as that grain; the woman's parents give the dowry, and eight days are spent in joviality and compliments.

Their Funerals are thus performed:

They put the dead body into a winding-sheet, and all the way to the burial-place, his kindred beat themselves, but preserving strict silence. Near the spot they are met by the priest, attired in a yellow scarf and thin turban. The bearers carry the corpse upon an iron bier (wood being forbidden, in that it is sacred to fire), to a little shed, and as soon as some mystic antics have been acted, they hoist it up to the top of a round stone building, twelve feet high, and eighty in circuit. 'Tis flat at top, and wholly open, and in the midst thereof is a hole, descending to the bottom, made to let in the putrefaction issuing from the melted bodies, which lie naked, exposed to the sun's flaming rage, and the merciless appetite of ravening vultures, which are commonly fed by these carcasses, tearing the raw flesh asunder, and deforming it in an ugly manner; so that the abominable stink of these unburied bodies, in some places three hundred in number, is so strong and loathsome, that did not a desire to behold strange sights allure travellers thither, they would be less seen than spoken of; nor, indeed, do the Persees delight that any stranger should go to view them.”

PANEGYRIC ON MONOSYLLABLES.

SIR,—If you will give this long piece on Short Words a page or two in the *Nic-Nac*, it may be a new source of joy to your old friend Bob Short, who, though* a sworn foe to all long words, may like to see or hear aught in praise of short sounds, though long words form links of the chain by which it hangs; or, if you like it as well, the feet or wheels on which it runs its course: but, such as it is, I send it, with all its faults on its head. If you think it good, clap it in the press and print it; if bad, clap it in the fire and burn it.

ALBEMANIA.

Though Dr. Johnson and his pompous imitators so strenuously exerted themselves to assert the dignity of Polysyllables, there have not been wanting men of talent and learning to

* See page 109, No. 14.

maintain, both by argument and practice, the force, energy, and terseness of those simple uncompounded explosions of the voice, called Monosyllables. The late Horne Tooke insisted on their force and efficacy; and when he had occasion to speak in public, prided himself in evincing their power, by almost confining himself to their exclusive use. He considered them, if not forming the noblest and most impressive part of the English language, that part which could least be dispensed with; and which, as qualified to convey the greatest portion of good sense in the smallest compass, bore in its convenience a value that entitled it to our highest respect.

I must own I adopt that philologist's opinion: Monosyllables do certainly give the English tongue an advantage over most other living languages in point of conciseness. Their breadth is short but strong. They breathe the very genius of the British nation: upon every argument they come close and quickly to the point. They speak with a clearness and boldness—touch and go on—and carry a man to the peroration of his speech, ere endless polysyllables, “dragging their slow length along,” would get him through his exordium. Even while I am now writing I feel the inconvenience of having used words of more than one syllable, and can by no means get on as I would wish, though, as it is clear, I do at this point of time try hard to keep to words of one brief sound. By the sense contained in these thirty-five foregoing monosyllables, how evident it is that great national advantages would arise, if Ministers, Members of Parliament, Judges, Counsellors, &c. would express themselves in monosyllables; what a saving of time, if the former would adopt such a plan for conducting the business of all Congresses, Preliminaries, Memorials, and Commissions for adjusting disputes. It has been generally thought that GREAT MEN should be masters of words of a great many syllables; but surely the honor they obtain by employing such words, is dearly bought by the trouble it constantly costs them, which might

be spared by the adoption of two snug little monosyllables. There is a numerous and exalted assembly, which, if it would but avail itself of other short words as freely as it does of these, would save itself a vast deal of time; and since we see the collective wisdom of the nation daily doing **AY** and **NO** the honor of debating which of these brief explosions of the lips shall triumph over the other, I cannot see why others of a like nature should not have their share of attention. Two others of these diminutive heroes I can name, whose importance has long been felt and acknowledged, and their aid resorted to with avidity by the honourable assembly I have just mentioned. I mean those pigmies in the Parliamentary Vocabulary, both of which are comprised in five letters, viz. the words **IN** and **OUT**. All nations, however great, are divided into two principal bodies—the **INS** and **OUTS**; and though the **ins** always form the wealthiest and most considerable of the two parties, the **outs**, at least in this country, are not without their share of weight and respectability. I now with pleasure name two more of these lingual dwarfs—**CHURCH** and **KING**. These, in all assemblies, public or private, are uttered with becoming pride, and listened to with the most heartfelt veneration. Combining the supreme object of our eternal welfare, as promised by religion, with that of our temporal happiness, as promised by a justequipoise between the power of the Crown and the protection of the laws. There are a few others small of body, but great of soul, as follow:—**Tax**, **Ways** and **Means**, **Gold**, **Debt**, **Votes**, **Stocks**, **Bank**, **Jobs**, **Puffs**, **Place**, **Bribe**, **Brief**, **Fee**, **Law**, all of which are indispensable, and held in constant requisition in their respective meridians. How many titles of honour and dignity moreover are formed of those invaluable little words: for instance, **King**, **Queen**, **Prince**, **Duke**, **Earl**, **Lord**, &c.

Could Queen Elizabeth rise from her grave, we should not doubt of her rejoicing to hear herself hailed by the monosyllabic title of **GOOD QUEEN**

Bees; nor, could Sir R. Walpole mount again the Treasury Bench, of his being equally pleased at his nickname **Bob**. I shall only add that there are many other monosyllables in our language which could not be too often or universally employed; among which none are more deservedly conspicuous than the six following:—"God save great George our King!"

● THE KING'S CHAMPION IN IRELAND.

THE following historical narrative of the De Courcys, Barons of Kinsale, has a romantic air about it, which renders it interesting, independent of its curiosity as an historical fact.

At Kinsale, which is a beautiful spot in the county of Cork, reside in great seclusion, a nobleman and his family, dear to antiquity and to the historian, and revered by their country; yet as little known to the modern peerage as if their family honours had been without the distinguished origin they possess.

John Courcy, of the kingdom of Ireland, was, in the reign of Henry II., created Lord Kinsale, Baron of Courcy and Baron of Kingstone, at so remote a date as the year 1181.

In those barbarous days, the fate of kingdoms was often decided by single combat. Kings entertained Champions; and to excel in tilt and tournament was the ambition of nobles and of princes.

During the reign of Henry II. some difference broke out between the courts of England and of France. Respecting the cause the historian is silent, and we therefore can only say that, to demand satisfaction, a French champion arrived in London.

The far famed prowess of this hero of the lance and plume, spread an unusual terror: the English people were panic-stricken, and the alarm of the Court was not only increased by this panic, but by the difficulty of providing a person to meet the challenger. England had no St. George to encounter this Hector of France.

The dilemma, in which the court found itself, having transpired, the

challenger lost all respect for the country, and the heart of Henry was agonized by the insolence of his exaltation.

While France and her champion chuckled at England's embarrassments, one of the nobles of Henry recollected that a person of the name of Courcy, who resided in Ireland, was reputed to possess amazing courage and strength, and infinite skill, both at the lance and the sword. He hastened to his royal master with the intelligence; the matter was discussed in council; and, more from curiosity than otherwise, Courcy was sent for.

Shortly after, without knowing for what he was summoned, arrived at the palace of Henry, in his native habiliments, without heraldic bearings or retinue, John Courcy of Kinsale, a man endowed by nature with a fine athletic person, and a noble and commanding countenance.

When the matter was opened to him, with a modest caution he requested to see the hero of France, who was accordingly introduced, bedecked with all the splendour of his court, forming a singular contrast to the plainness of his proposed antagonist. The Frenchman conducted himself with an insulting hauteur; the Irishman behaved himself with the most intimidating indifference. Each took the other's dimensions, and the parties adjourned for farther consultation.

When Courcy was asked in confidence if he would choose to accept the challenge, he declined giving an answer until he should procure from his home a certain sword.

Some insinuations about this sword excited so much curiosity, that the king sent for it forthwith; meanwhile Courcy remained at the palace of Henry, entertained with all due respect.

At length arrived this eagerly-expected weapon, which was, to all appearance, no more than the unornamented simple sword of a warrior.

The moment this talismanic weapon was presented to its owner, he requested that an immense block of wood might be placed in the tilt-yard,

and that the Champion of France should be summoned forthwith, both of which wishes were accordingly complied with.

As before, the Knight of Gaul could scarcely forbear rudeness and ridicule; the Hibernian was, as before, polite, reserved, and composed.

Expectation was now on tiptoe to see the mystical preparations of Courcy unriddled. When all was arranged and silent, he drew his sword from his scabbard, and with one tremendous blow, wedged it into the block, like a thunderbolt. "The man," said he, looking significantly on the king, "the man who shall with one hand draw out that sword, I will acknowledge as conqueror." Then turning to the Champion of France, he politely requested him to hand him his sword. The boaster was confounded, stammered, stepped forward towards the block, and retreated. A laugh broke forth from the auditory; all cried "Draw forth the sword." Overwhelmed with shame and confusion, the glittering knight not only declined to do so, but declined a single combat with John de Courcy.

A universal shout of joy and exultation rent the air, and John de Courcy was declared to be the CHAMPION OF ENGLAND.

When the submission of the foreigner was complete, for the gratification of his curiosity, he did attempt with one hand to extricate the blade from the block. He might as easily have drawn the poles through the earth; but to his consternation and amazement, and to the delight and astonishment of Henry and his nobles, De Courcy drew it out with as much ease as he had drawn it from its scabbard.

The grateful monarch instantly conferred upon this Champion of England, the title of Baron of Kinsale, and bid him name the reward that should be appended to his dignity; when, singular as true, this most extraordinary man, with that romantic disinterestedness which is so often injurious to his countrymen, claimed, instead of pecuniary compensation, to be distinguished above other noblemen. He claimed permission that the De Courcys should wear their hats in

the King's presence, which privilege was granted, and is still enjoyed by the family.

In proportion as this noble-minded man was proud and generous, Henry was liberal and condescending. His munificence was not to be counteracted by the too delicate pride of his amiable subject.

On the departure of Lord Kinsale, his Majesty, in private conference, commanded him, when he should arrive at his home, to mount his horse some morning at sunrise, and gave the royal promise, that, so much land as he could ride round before sunset, should be the estate of the Baron of Kinsale and his heirs.

When the Baron returned, conformably to the King's command, he did mount his horse, at sunrise, on a certain day, for the purpose of measuring an estate; but, alas! too noble to be mercenary, and too convivial to be provident, he stopt at the house of a friend, staid to dine, and, instead of thinking of acres and of watching the sands of time, chatted over the bottle till darkness told him that the sun and the fortune of De Courcy had set together.

EATTLE BRIDGE.

J. C. A. E.

Interesting Varieties.

BREAKFAST POWDER.

SOME animadversions have lately appeared in the public papers upon the high price charged for this article by Mr. Henry Hunt, who is a wholesale manufacturer of it. As a pound, which sold at the shops costs 1s., if prepared at home would not cost 2d., we have extracted the following receipt for preparing it, from Cobbett's "Address to the Female Reformers," published in his Register of December 29, 1819:—

"Tea is really unwholesome; that is, it is injurious both to the stomach and the nerves. Very nearly the same may be said of coffee, and it is notorious that if either of them be chewed in a raw state, they are perfectly offensive to the taste. I have substituted, in their stead, for both morning and evening, ROASTED WHEAT. And I

positively assert, that it would be impossible for me to distinguish the beverage made from the wheat, from that made with coffee, except that the former has a rather milder and pleasanter taste than the latter. Same colour when ground; same smell, as nearly as possible; and I verily believe that if sold ground, in a shop, not one person out of ten thousand would be able to distinguish the one from the other, unless he had both before him at the same moment. The fact is that the coffee is a bean; a split bean, and that too, of a very coarse and unnutritive quality; while the wheat is, as we well know, a most nutritious grain.

“This is a matter of so much importance to Females, that I hope you will excuse me if I enter into some detail as to the method of preparing this article; which, as you will presently see, may be prepared, in every family in England, Scotland, and Ireland, without the smallest inconvenience. A common iron pot is what we make use of for the roasting of the wheat. The pot, first being made very clean, is to be put over a slow fire. When it gets pretty well heated, put in the wheat, not being more than the sixth part of the pot full. From the moment the wheat is put in, keep stirring it constantly and quickly, until it become as dark coloured as roasted coffee. Then take it out, put it by, grind it, and use it in the same manner as coffee. As to clearing the wheat coffee, the means are precisely the same as those used for clearing the foreign coffee. Some persons put something into the boiling coffee, in order to clear it. But the best way is this: make a flannel bag, which, when full, is in the shape of a sugar loaf turned upside-down. Let this bag, at the open end, be sewed round a bit of wire, in a circular form. Put the bag, hanging down, into the coffee pot or mug, and the wire rim will keep it suspended. Put the coffee into the bag. Then pour boiling water upon the coffee, until you have as much as you want to drink. The flannel bag will keep back all the coffee grounds, and you

will have the coffee fine and clear. You may set it over the fire again to keep it hot.

“The wheat, at the present price, seven shillings and sixpence a bushel, costs one penny half-penny a pound. It loses a fourth part of its weight in roasting, which brings it to two-pence a pound, while the most nauseous and villanous Coffee that can be bought in retail, costs about three shillings a pound. The whole of the tax raised last year upon tea and coffee, amounted to four millions, two hundred and eighty seven thousand, two hundred and thirty nine pounds, sterling money! This you will please to observe was the amount of the tax alone, exclusive of the cost of the noxious articles. Let me hope, therefore, that this suggestion will be speedily put into practice amongst all those who love either their families or their country. Frugality is always a virtue; and more especially in a case like the present. No woman, who will not take the pains, if pains it can be called, to provide her family with this beverage, shall ever persuade me that her attachment to good principles exists any where but upon her lips.

“I gave some of this coffee to a neighbour of mine, who had drunk coffee for years, and he drunk it as coffee, having no notion of its being other than the coffee he usually drank except, as he afterwards said, he thought it rather milder; and, upon our telling him that it was Turkey coffee, and not plantation coffee, he took that to be the cause of the difference. I am speaking to a whole people, every family of whom have it in their power to try the experiment.”

ENGLISH CATHEDRALS.

EVERY one who has an eye to see and a soul to feel, must, on entering York Cathedral or Chapter-house, the Cathedrals of Lincoln and Winchester, or on contemplating the majestic front of Peterborough Cathedral, experience irresistible impressions of mingled solemnity and delight, such as none but similar edifices are capable of pro-

ducing. If he should enquire when were these extraordinary specimens of architectural skill, rivalling in their execution, and surpassing in solemnity the proudest structures of Athens and Rome, erected; what would be his astonishment, had he not previously ascertained the fact, on being told in reply that "they were built during the dark ages!" When but few even of the Clergy could read, and scarcely any of them could write their own names; when nobles lay upon straw, and thought a fresh supply of clean straw in their chamber, once a week, a great luxury; when monarchs usually travelled on horseback, and when they met wrestled with each other, for the amusement of their courtiers: then it was, that architects, whose names have not reached us, and whose manners and course of instruction are merely conjectured, raised buildings almost to the clouds, with stones most of which they might have carried under their arms. Rude men, untaught by science, applied the principles of arcuation, of thrust, and of pressure, to an extent that would have made Wren and Jones tremble. Men, ignorant of metaphysical theories, so blended forms and magnitudes, light and shade, as to produce the artificial infinite and the real sublime. Men, who lived in the grossest superstition, erected temples for the worship of God, which seem as if intended to rival in durability the earth on which they stand; and which after the lapse of several ages are still unequalled, not only in point of magnificence of structure, but in their tendency to dilate the mind, and to leave upon the soul the most deep and solemn impressions. This is an anomaly in the history of the fine arts which has never been adequately explained: the investigation of the subject, however, is worthy of the attention of the philosophic and inquisitive.

LINES,

Written with a Pencil, standing by the
Fall of Fyers, near Loch Ness.

Among the heathy hills and ragged woods
The roaring Fyers pours his mossy
floods,

Till full he dashes on the rocky mounds.
Where, through a shapeless breach, his
stream resounds.

As high in air the bursting torrents flow,
As deep, recoiling surges foam below;
Prone down the rock the whitening
sheet descends,

And viewless echo's ear, astonish'd, rends.
Dimseen, through rising mists and cease-
less show'rs,

The hoary cavern, wide surrounding
low'rs.

Still through the gap the straggling
river toils,

And still, below, the horrid cauldron
boils.

CURIOSUS.

TRANS-ATLANTIC VARIETIES,

OR,

SELECTIONS FROM AMERICAN
JOURNALS.

(Resumed from page 223.)

OLD TIMES.—The subsequent extracts from "Winthrop's Journal," a book which gives a minute account of the history of the first years of the colony of Massachusetts, may perhaps afford our readers as much amusement, and as much instruction as the ordinary chapter of accidents, with which we are too often compelled to occupy our columns.

1631. "At a court, one Josias Playstone and two of his servants were sentenced, for stealing corn from Chickatabot, the master to restore two fold, be degraded from the title of a gentleman, and be fined 5l., and his men to be whipped.

1635. "At this court brass farthings were forbidden, and musket bullets made to pass for farthings.

1627. "Being about full moon, about ten o'clock in the evening, in a clear sky, a perfect moon was seen about a slight shot northerly from the true moon. It was seen for about half an hour, and then vanished with dim flashings. It was more dim than the true moon.

1637. "There was an old woman in Ipswich, who came out of England blind and deaf, yet her son could make her understand any thing and know any man's name by her sense of feeling. He could write upon her hand some letters of the name, and by other such motions would inform

her; this the Governor himself (i. e. the writer of this account) had tried often when he was at Ipswich.

1638. "This was a very hard winter.—The snow lay from Nov. 4th to March 23d, one and a half yard deep, about the Massachusetts, and a yard deep beyond the Merrimack, and so the more north the deeper, and the spring was very backward. This day (Nov. 4th) it did snow two hours together, after much rain from the north east, with flakes as big as a shilling.

1639. "At the general court, an order was made to abolish that vain custom of drinking one to another, and that upon these and other grounds:—First, it was a thing of no good use. Second, it was an inducement to drunkenness, and occasion of quarrelling and bloodshed. Third, it occasioned much waste of wine and beer. Fourth, it was very troublesome to many, especially the masters and mistresses of the feast, who were forced thereby to drink more often than they would. Yet divers, even godly persons, were very sorry to part with this idle ceremony.

1640. "One of the ships which came this summer, struck upon a whale, which put the ship a-stays. The whale struck the ship on her bow with her tail a little above water, and broke the planks, six timbers, and the beam, and staved two hogsheads of vinegar.

1640. "At the court of assistants, one Hugh Bewett was banished for holding publicly and maintaining that he was free from original sin, and from actual also, for half a year before; and that all true christians (after regeneration) were enabled to live without committing sin."

BAGOTA.—The editor of this paper has letters from his friend Col. Todd, dated Bagota, 18th January, 1823. The city contains 30,000 inhabitants, "with the climate of our October and the verdure of July—the temperature varying not more than five degrees

throughout the year." The site is beautiful at the foot of the mountains. Within six leagues, there is a cascade six hundred and fifty feet high. Salt is taken out of the mountains, eight leagues distant—"fine and beautiful for table use." Colonel Todd adds—"In the vicinity of the saltworks is a lake, where, from the first conquest, it has been a religious custom to deposit articles of gold and silver. There is a company now engaged in examining it. Among other articles, there was found a large piece of gold, modelled into the shape of a monkey, which the owner proposes to present to the President of the United States—a solid, though not a very complimentary gift. There is also in the vicinity a natural bridge, exceeding in grandeur the celebrated bridge near Lexington, Virginia; and, while we are in the climate and productions of our October, there is a valley just below us which gives us daily all the fruits of the tropics."—(*Philadelphia Weekly Register.*)

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are requested by K. to assure Curiosus, Clio, and C. M. that he would most readily comply with their requests, had they not been anticipated by T. J.—d. We shall feel obliged by a perusal of the tract mentioned by G. G. A. The "Weather Table," about which there has been so much controversy of late in the "New Times" and "Morning Chronicle," was printed in our 17th Number. All the transcripts forwarded by Mercutio came to hand. Several Correspondents have expressed a wish that * and TRUTH will resume their contributions. A letter lies at the Office for D.

RECEIVED.—W. Penneck, T. G., X. [Wolverhampton]. Sampson Agonistes, Tetotum, Hugo Grim, L. P., Spec, T, H. S., G. S. W., and Pangloss.

REJECTED.—Pepin, Joe, L. L. K., Susan, and Apex.

ERRATA.—P. 223, col. 2, l. 21. read resumed at p. 343—P. 325, col. 1, l. 13, read persevered.

* * We will forward Mrs. Woolley's work to T. J.—its address in a few days.

THE NIC-NAG;

OR,

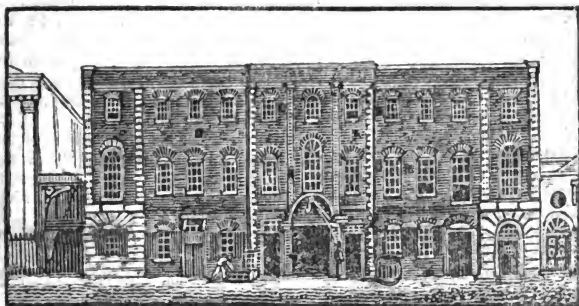
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 44.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



THE STAFFORDSHIRE WAREHOUSE, PORTUGAL-STREET, FORMERLY
LINCOLN'S-INN FIELDS THEATRE.

THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE, SECTION 13.—For some time the revolted company (vide page 230) proceeded very successfully; but, from an unexpected cause, the excess of their good-fortune appeared likely to prove its own destruction. So great was the concourse of visitors that flocked to witness their performances, that the quiet of the neighbourhood was destroyed; and the nuisance becoming unbearable, a number of the inhabitants associated for the purpose of procuring an injunction, restraining the company from playing at this house; a rule to this effect was in fact granted in the Court of King's Bench, and cause shewn against it in the following term. Further particulars of this proceeding are not on record, but it may be presumed that the inhabitants were defeated, or that some compromise was entered into between the parties, as the company continued to perform at this theatre for several years afterwards. Their prosperity, however, was not of long duration; after a season or two, their audiences began to decline most sensibly; and it was found that

the town could not support two theatres; or that mismanagement naturally led to ruin.

Another source of inconvenience to the company was the smallness of their house, which was very ill contrived, having never been regularly laid out as a theatre, but fitted up to answer that purpose from time to time. (Vide Sec. 10.) This led Sir John Vanbrugh to enter upon a speculation to raise subscriptions for the erection of a larger and more magnificent house, to be situated in the Haymarket, on the site of the present King's Theatre. The sum of 3000*l.* was immediately subscribed, and Sir John commenced his operations. In 1705, the new theatre being completed, was opened in the month of April, but the anticipated success was by no means experienced. The choice of a situation was certainly injudicious, since at that period the aspect of the neighbourhood was very different from that which it now presents, being the mere outskirts of the town, and far distant from those who formed the principal supporters of the theatres. The defects of its construction were likewise insu-

perable obstacles to its success. Vanbrugh endeavoured to combat his disadvantages by the production of some of his best pieces, but without much success; and after a season or two, he became so disgusted with the concern, that he transferred it to one M'Swiny for a consideration of 700*l.* per annum. This M'Swiny was in the business a mere agent of Rich, the Drury Lane Manager; thus the two companies in effect fell again under one government, and the theatre in the Haymarket was for a time dedicated solely to the performance of Italian Operas.

Instead of being induced by experience to change his measures, Rich continued his old tyrannical and oppressive conduct, which had the natural effect of completely disgusting the performers, who again rebelled; a body of them procured a license from the Lord Chamberlain to perform at the theatre in the Haymarket; and, moreover, an order was issued by him on the 17th of June, 1709, forbidding the further performance of plays at Drury Lane.

The revolvers immediately proceeded to alter the new theatre in the Haymarket, and endeavour to remedy its defects. This being partly accomplished, they began to perform there in the winter of 1709, and as they were now freed from their late thralldom, and found their profits rather increased, they had every reason to be satisfied with their change of situation. In the mean time, the prohibition against Drury Lane continued in full force; while Rich retained possession of the house, to the utter exclusion of his partners in the concern. One of these, however, a lawyer named Collier, who was a member of Parliament, and had some influence at court, obtained a license to assume the entire management of the Drury Lane Company; and also a lease of the house from the landlord; he then on a rejoicing night, in the month of November, at the head of a hired rabble, broke into the theatre, and turning Rich into the street, terminated for ever his dominion in that quarter.

The performances were now carried on for the remainder of the season

under the management of Collier; but he not finding the thing so lucrative as he had anticipated, again employed his interest at Court, to procure an exchange of theatres with the company performing at the Haymarket. Here, however, he soon became dissatisfied, and again returned to Drury Lane; supported by the power of the Court in these caprices; which in the end, without benefitting himself, completely ruined poor M'Swiny, the manager of the company in the Haymarket, who fled the kingdom. Collier shortly after became a sleeping partner in Drury Lane, which was now the only theatre; and the management being vested in Wilks, Dogget, and Cibber, they by their judicious conduct, and most admirable acting, raised the drama to a state of prosperity and credit, which it perhaps has never since attained.

After his expulsion from Drury Lane, Rich employed himself in rebuilding Davenant's old theatre in Portugal Street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields (vide Section 10), but did not live to see it completed. It was, however, finished by his son, John Rich, and he finding means to remove the prohibition under which the patent laboured, the new house was opened in the year 1714 with the comedy of "The Recruiting Officer," and performances were continued there till 1733, when it was deserted for the theatre in Covent Garden. The building has since that period been dedicated to various purposes, and of late years has been used as a Staffordshire Warehouse, by Messrs. Spode and Copeland. The above view was taken, in July 1818, and the appearance of the front has not since undergone any alteration.—(Resumed at page 361.)

WALPOLIANA;

OR, EXTRACTS FROM THE CORRESPONDENCE OF HORACE WALPOLE, ADDRESSED TO LORD CONWAY.

"Radicosani, Italy, July 5, 1740. WELL, but about writing—what do you think I write with? Nay, with a pen: there was not one to be found in the whole circumference, BUT ONE,

and that was in the possession of the governor, and had been used time out of mind, to write the parole with: I was forced to send to borrow it. It was sent to me under the conduct of a sergeant and two Swiss, with a desire to return it as soon as I had done with it. 'Tis a curiosity, and worthy to be laid up with the relics which we have just been seeing, in a small hovel of Capuchins, on the side of a hill, and which were all brought by his majesty from Jerusalem. Among other things of great sanctity, there is a set of gnashing of teeth, the grinders very entire; a bit of the worm that never dies, preserved in spirits; a crow of St. Peter's cock, very useful against Easter; the crisping and curling, frizzling and flouncing, of Mary Magdalen, which she cut off on growing devout. The good man that shewed us all these commodities, was got into such a train of calling them the blessed this, and the blessed that, that at last he shewed us a bit of the blessed fig-tree that Christ cursed."

"Arlington St. Sept. 9. 1761.

YESTERDAY, at a quarter past three, the new queen arrived at St. James's. In half an hour we heard nothing but proclamations of her beauty; every body was content, every one pleased. At seven, we went to court. The night was sultry. About ten the procession began to move toward the chapel, and at eleven they all came up into the 'Chambre de compagnie.' She looks very sensible, cheerful, and is remarkably genteel. Her tiara of diamonds was very pretty, and her stomach sumptuous. You will have no doubts of her sense, by what I shall tell you. On the road they wanted her to curl her toupie: she said she thought it looked as well as any of the ladies sent to fetch her: if the king bade her, she would wear a perriwig, otherwise she would remain as she was. When she caught the first glimpse of the palace she grew frightened, and turned pale; the Duchess of Hamilton smiled. The princess said, "My dear duchess, you may laugh, you have been married twice, but it is no joke to me." Her lips trembled as the coach stopped, but

she jumped out with spirit, and has done nothing but with good humour and cheerfulness. She eats a great deal, is easy, civil, and not discontented."

"Strawberry Hill. 1763.

You say you have seen the North Briton, in which I am a capital figure. Wilkes, the author, I hear, says, that if he had thought I should have taken it so well, he would have been damned before he had written it; but I am not sore where I am not sore."

"Amiens, Sept. 1765.

For a French absurdity, I have observed that along the great roads they plant walnut-trees, but strip them for firing. It is like the owl that bit off the feet of the mice, that they might lie still and fatten."

THE LONDON TOPOGRAPHER,

NO. II.

CHAUCER'S INN.—As the Borough High Street was formerly the chief passage into a great part of the kingdom, to and from the capital, it was particularly well furnished with inns. One has been immortalized by Chaucer. The sign is now perverted into the Talbot. It originally was the Tabard, so called from the sign—a sleeveless coat, open on both sides, with a square collar, and winged at the shoulders; worn by persons of rank in the wars, with their arms painted on them, that they might be known. The use is now transferred to the heralds.—This was the rendezvous of the jolly pilgrims, who formed the troop which our father of poetry describes sallying out to pay their devotions to the great St. Thomas Becket, who for a long time superseded almost every other saint.

"Befelle that in that season, on a day,
In Southwerk, at the Tabard, as I lay,
Redy to wender on my pilgrimage
To Canterbury, with devoute corage,
At night was come into that hostellerie
Wel nine and twenty in a compaignie,
Of sondry folk, by aventure yfalle,
In felowship, and pilgrims were they alle,
That toward Canterbury wolden ride,
The chambres and the stables weren wide,
And wel we weren esed alle beste."

The front of the house now bears an inscription, commemorative of the circumstance.

JANE SHORE.—The house in which the husband of the celebrated Jane Shore formerly lived (as can be proved by old leases), was No. 43, Lombard-street. It is supposed the present house of that number is the same dwelling, though, from the extensive repairs it has undergone at various periods, it has now a modern appearance. Shore was a silversmith, and his house always continued in the occupation of one of that trade till within the last fourteen years, when it came into the hands of Mr. Alger, a bootmaker, who is the present occupant.

TOWER HILL.—Magna Britt, 1724, page 77, says, "In the reign of Edward IV. there was a Scaffold and Gallows set up here by the Officers of the Tower, for the execution of such malefactors as should be condemned to suffer from thence; but, most of them having been for many years last past, either persons of quality, or otherwise of great note, the gallows is long since pulled down, but the scaffold remains."

ST. ANDREW UNDERSHAFT is so called, to distinguish it from other churches in the city dedicated to St. Andrew. The reason of the addition of Undershaft, was this:—It was a custom in old time, upon May Day in the morning every year, in this parish, to set up a high shaft or May-pole in the midst of the street, over against the south door of this church, which was higher than the steeple. This practice continued till **EVIL MAY-DAY**, in 1517, when there was an insurrection of the apprentices and other young persons against the foreigners, who had insulted some citizens, and much harmed them. After this, the shaft was never erected, but was laid up over the doors of one row of houses in an Alley Gate, called from it **SHAFT ALLEY**. Here it lay many years; till one St. Stephen, Curate of St. Katharine Christ Church, preaching at Paul's

Cross, said that the Shaft was made an Idol, by naming the Church of St. Andrew from it. This sermon had such influence upon the inhabitants of the houses over whose doors it lay, that in the afternoon of the same Sunday it was preached, they sawed the shaft in pieces, and divided it amongst them; but, though the shaft was destroyed, the name has continued ever since, without any suspicion of idolatry, being only used as a name of distinction.

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS—The street front of this building, a small part of which only can be seen on account of the adjoining houses, consists of a portico of stone, of an octagon form, which is crowned with a dome. On the top of the dome is a gilt ball, on the summit of the centre the bird of Esculapius, the admonishing cock. Dr. Garth wittily calls the former the gilded pill.

"Where stands a dome majestic to the sight,
And sumptuous arches bear it's oval height,
A golden globe plac'd high, with artful skill,
Seems to the distant sight a gilded pill."

This portico leads into a square court, surrounded by brick buildings, the western front of which, facing the entrance, is a very elegant piece of architecture. Here, in niches in the building, are good statues of King Charles II. and Sir John Cutler. The latter was a notorious miser; and it is related of him, that he tricked the College out of the honour of a statue, by a donation which he afterwards charged them in his books as a debt. "I was greatly at a loss," says Pen-nant, who relates this anecdote, "to learn why so much respect was shown to a character so stigmatised for avarice. I think myself much indebted to Dr. Warren for the extraordinary history. It appears by the annals of the College, that in the year 1674, a considerable sum of money had been subscribed by the Fellows for the erection of a new College, the old one having been consumed in the great fire eight

years before. It also appears that Sir John Cutler, a near relation of Dr. Whistler, the President, was desirous of becoming a benefactor. A committee was appointed to wait upon Sir John, to thank him for his kind intentions. He accepted their thanks, renewed his promise, and specified the part of the building of which he intended to bear the expense. In the year 1680, statues in honour of the King and Sir John, were voted by the members, and nine years afterwards, the College being then completed, it was resolved to borrow money of Sir John Cutler, to discharge the College debt; but the sum is not specified. It appears, however, that in 1699, Sir John's executors made a demand on the College, of 7,000*l*, which sum was supposed to include the money actually lent, the money pretended to be given, and the interest on both. Lord Radnor, however, and Mr. Boulter, Sir John Cutler's executors, were prevailed on to accept 2,000*l*. from the College, and actually remitted the other five; so that Sir John Cutler's promise, which he never performed, obtained him this statue, and the liberality of his executors has kept it in its place ever since. But the College wisely have obliterated the inscription, which in the warmth of its gratitude it had placed beneath the figure:—

Omnis Cutleri cedat labor Amphitheatro.

This is Mr. Pennant's anecdote, and coupled with Pope's character of him, certainly justifies a conclusion by no means favourable. It is certain, however, that Sir John Cutler was a good benefactor to the Grocer's Company, of which he was no less than four times master, and rebuilt great part of their Hall after the fire of 1666, which they still gratefully commemorate, by preserving his likeness both in marble and on canvas, by which he appears to have been a good-looking man. He was created a Baronet, November 12, 1660, so that he had some claim of gratitude on the restored Monarch. He died in 1693. His kinsman and executor, Edmund Boulter, expended 7,686*l*. on his funeral.

Interesting Varieties.

BILL JONES.

"Now well a day!" the sailor said,
"Some danger must impend;
Three ravens sit in yonder glade,
And harm will happen I'm sore afraid,
Ere we reach our journey's end."

"And what have the ravens with us to do?
Does their sight then bode us evil?"
"Why, to find one raven is lucky, 'tis true;
But 'tis certain misfortune to light on two,
And meeting with three is the devil."

I've known full three score years go by,
And only twice before
I've seen three ravens near me fly;
And twice good cause to wish had I,
That I ne'er might see them more.

The first time I was wreck'd at sea,
The second time by fire,
I lost my wife and children three,
That self same night; and woe is me
That I did not then expire.

Still do I hear their screams for aid,
Which to give was past man's power;
I saw in earth their coffins laid,—
Well! my heart of marble must be made
Since it did not break that hour!"

"Poor soul, your tale of many woes
Brings tears into my eyes:
But, think you then, such ills arise,
Because you saw your fancied foes,
Three ravens near you rise?"

No doubt, since this fantastic fear
Has thus possess your head,
You firmly believe that ghosts appear,
And that dead men rise from the blood-
stained bier,
To haunt the murderer's bed."

"Believe it, master! well I may:
Now mark what I relate;
For, Gospel-true are the words I say,
When I swear, that during three weeks
and a day,
A GHOST was my own shipmate."

My cash ran low, no beef, no flip,
And the times were hard to live;
So I e'en resolv'd to make a trip
For slaves, on board a Guinea ship,
Which crane may God forgive.

Oh 'twas a sad, sad thing to hear
The negroes scream and groan,

And curse the billows which bore them
near
To the tyrant white man's land of fear,
And far, far away from their own.

But soon the sailor found his part
Scarce better than the slaves';
For our captain had a tyger's heart,
And he plagued his crew with such bar-
barous art,
We all wish'd us in our graves.

We scarce were two day's sail from port,
Ere many a back was flayed;
He flogged us oft in wanton sport;
His heart was of stone, not flesh, in short,
He was fit for such a trade.

Tho' each in turn was treated ill,
'Mongst all the crew alone,
Bill Jones opposed our tyrant's will,
For Bill was cross and old, and still
He'd give him back his own.

And many a brutal harsh command
Old Bill had grumbled at,
Till once he was order'd a sail to hand,
When Bill was so weak he scarce could
stand,
But the captain scoff'd at that.

For a lazy old brute, poor Bill he abus'd,
And he forc'd him aloft to go;
But their duty to do his limbs refused,
And at length from the ropes his hands
Bill loosed,
And he fell on the deck below.

Towards him straight the captain flew,
Crying, 'Dog, dost serve me so?'
And with devilish spite his sword he drew,
And he ran Bill Jones quite thro' and
thro',
And the blow was a mortal blow.

At the point of death poor Bill now lies,
And stains the deck with gore;
And fixing his own on his murderer's
eyes,
'Captain, alive or dead,' he cries,
I ne'er will leave you more.'

'You wont?' says the captain, 'time
will shew
If you keep your word or not;
For now in the negro kettle below,
Old dog, your scoundrel limbs I'll throw,
And I'll see what fat you've got.'

So he caused the cook to make water hot,
And the corpse, both flesh and bones,
(To see what fat Bill Jones had got)
The captain boiled in the negro-pot,
But there was not much fat in Jones.

If well his word the captain kept,
Bill Jones kept his as well;
For just at midnight, all who slept,
With one consent from their hammocks
leapt,
Roused by a dreadful yell.

Never was heard a more terrible sound;
Fast to the deck we hied;
And there by the moon-beam's light we
found
The murdered man, in spite of his wound,
Sitting close to the steerman's side.

And from that hour, among the rest,
Bill served, nor left us more;
With bloody trowsers, bloody vest,
And bloody shirt, and bloody breast,
Still he stood our eyes before.

And he'd clean the deck, or fill the pail,
Or he'd work with right good will,
To stop a leak, or drive a nail;
But whenever the business was handing
a sail,
Then specially ready was Bill.

And to share in all things with the crew,
Did the spectre never miss;
And when to the cook for his portion due
Each sailor went, Bill Jones went too,
And tendered his platter for his.

His face look'd pale, his limbs seemed
weak,
His footsteps fell so still,
That to hear their sound you'd vainly
seek;
And to none of the crew did Bill e'er
speak;
And none of us spoke to Bill.

But when three weeks had crept away,
As you just now have heard,
The captain came on deck one day,
And quoth he, "My lads, I've some-
thing to say,
Bill Jones is as good as his word.

He never leaves me day nor night,
He haunts me, haunts me still;
By the midnight lamp I see the spright,
And when at morn the sky grows light,
The first sun-beam shews me Bill.

At meals his pale lips speak the grace,
His cold hand gives the wine;
At ev'ry hour, in ev'ry place,
To which ever side I turn my face,
Bill's eyes are fix'd on mine.

Now, lads, my resolution's made,
One means will set me free;

And Bill's pursuit for ever evade.
He comes—he comes—then away,' he
said,
And plung'd into the sea.

None mov'd a joint, the wretch to save,
All stood with staring eyes;
Each clasp'd his hand; a groan each gave;
When, lo! on a sudden, above the wave,
Once more did the captain rise.

Fix'd and fearful was his eye,
And pale as a corpse his brow;
And we saw him clasp his hands on high,
And we heard him scream with a terrible
cry,—
' By God, Bill's with me now!'

Then down he sank thro' the foaming
flood,
To Hell, that worst of havens:
Now Heaven preserve you, master good,
From perilous rage, and innocent blood,
And from meeting with three ravens!"

STEALING THE CROWN.

SIR,—The attempt made by Colonel Blood to steal the Crown from the Tower (described in your 26th and three following numbers) is not entirely without parallel, as you will perceive by the following scrap of intelligence, which I have just stumbled upon in the "Champion," Sunday newspaper, of April 2d., 1815.

Yours, RAZOR.

18th September, 1823.

"A singular and most daring attempt to steal the Crown at the Jewel Office, in the Tower, was made Friday afternoon about two o'clock, by a woman very meanly dressed, who, under pretext of viewing the Regalia, gained admittance, and made a seizure of the diadem, by thrusting her arm through the iron bars, which are placed for security; the attempt was, however, rendered futile, by the Crown being too large to admit of being forced through them, and though much bruised by the violence of the grasp, yet fortunately none of the jewels were unset. The female appointed to exhibit the Regalia fainted, but alarm being instantly given, the woman was secured, and conveyed from the Tower in a hackney coach to a Police Office."

SOLUTIONS TO ARTICLES,

IN NO. V OF THE SPHINX, P. 336.

CHARADES.—1. Peerage.—2. Rushlight.

PARADOX.—The lady walked 200 yards backward.

QUERY.—Because I bring a far thing (farthing) present.

ENIGMA.—Co-nun-drum.

CONUNDRUMS.

1. A Sack-butt.
2. Because He-brews drink there.
3. Because it turns night into day.
4. Because he gets his living by water.
5. Because it becomes a sentry (century) box.
6. A wedding-ring.
7. Because he's attached to a petticoat.

. Solutions to several of the articles were received from Humphrey Short, Pangloss, Jabal, T. P., and Leila.

The Wit's Nunchion.

THURMOND was the name of an actor of some repute in Ireland, about the commencement of the last century. Chetwood, in his "History of the Stage," 1749, relates an anecdote of him, in language not very remarkable for its elegance:—"It was a custom," says he, "at that time, for persons of the first rank and distinction to give their birth-day suits to the most favoured actors. I think Mr. Thurmond was honoured by General Ingholdsby with his; but his finances being at the last tide of ebb, the rich suit was put in buckle (a cant word for forty in the hundred, interest.) One night, notice was given that the general would be present with the government at the play; and all the performers were preparing to dress out in the suits presented. The spouse of Johnny, as he was commonly called, tried all her arts to persuade Mr. Holdfast, the pawnbroker (his real name as it fell out), to let go the clothes for that evening, to be returned when the play was over; but all arguments were fruitless; nothing but the ready, or a pledge of equal value, would serve. Such people

would have despised a Demosthenes, or a Cicero, with all their rhetorical flourishes, if their oratorian gowns had been in pledge. Well! what was to be done? The whole family in confusion, and at their wits' end. Disgrace, with her glaring eyes, and extended mouth, ready to devour. At last Winny, his wife, putting on a composed countenance, but, alas, with a troubled heart, stepped to a neighbouring tavern, and bespoke a very hot negus, to comfort Johnny in the great part he was to perform that night; begging to have it in a silver tankard, with a lid, because, as she said, that would retain the heat longer than any other metal. Her request was complied with; the negus carried piping hot to the playhouse; and being popped into a vile earthen mug, the silver tankard was put into the pawnbroker's hands, in exchange for the suit. At the conclusion of the play, the wardrobe was carried back to its old depository—the tankard returned the right road, and thus all ended to Thurmond's satisfaction."

CASTLE-BUILDING.—In the early part of the reign of George II., the footman of a lady of quality, under the absurd infatuation of a dream, disposed of the savings of the last 20 years of his life in two lottery tickets, which proving blanks, after a few days he put an end to his life. In his box was found the following plan of the manner in which he would spend the 5000*l.* prize, which his mistress preserved as a curiosity: "As soon as I have received the money, I will marry Grace Towers; but, as she has been cross and coy, I will use her as a servant. Every morning she shall get me a mug of strong beer, with a toast, nutmeg, and sugar in it; then I will sleep till ten, after which I will have a large sack posset. My dinner shall be on table by one, and never without a good pudding. I will have a stock of wine and brandy laid in. About

five in the afternoon I will have tarts and jellies, and a gallon bowl of punch; at ten, a hot supper of two dishes. If I am in good humour, and Grace behaves herself, she shall sit down with me.—To bed about twelve."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Jabal must be patient; we have many pieces lying by us for insertion, which have been on hand much longer than his; the article, however, shall certainly appear. Communications, possessing any merit, though frequently in appearance neglected, always receive due attention eventually, as many of our Correspondents will have perceived during the last few weeks. We hope this explanation will be accepted as a sufficient apology by various impatient contributors, who have urged us to expedite the insertion of their productions. G. Ripon is a sad dog, but we will endeavour to make use of his effusions, after extracting the poison of indelicacy which occasionally debases them. We hope to hear no more of such vulgar abuse as we have experienced from Leporello. We hardly know what to say in reply to Susan's enquiry about the series of "Ghost-Stories;" so many correspondents objected to the subject, that we resolved upon discontinuing it altogether; but we confess that we have found ourselves placed exactly in the situation of the Old Man and his Ass,—in endeavouring to gratify one party we have offended the other: what can we possibly do to conciliate both? G. S. W.'s "Poems," are placed on the file to take their turn for insertion. We hope Pangloss will perform his promise punctually and speedily. A letter directed solely for the Editor, is returned to the Post-Office.

ERRATA.—P. 268, col. 2, read "resumed at p. 347."—P. 336, col. 2, line 40, read "the sun."

RECEIVED.—Hydra, 1. 2. 7., Fallowfield, G. P., Rozello, A. Young, Ali Pacha, Giles, Te-to-tum, Brown Bess, Highflyer, L. L. D., Amen, and J. P.

REJECTED. Humphrey Short's "Acrostic." T. P., and Cui Bono?

THE NIC-NAO;

OR,

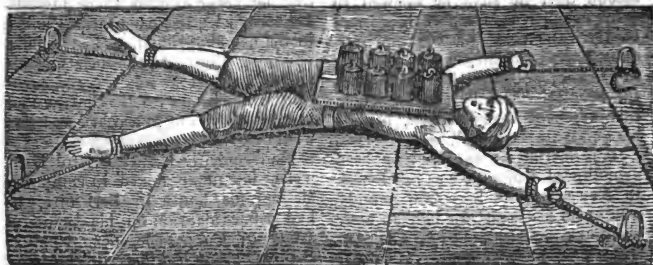
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

No. 45.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



W. SPIGGOTT UNDER PRESSURE IN NEWGATE.

THE punishment of pressing to death, or the *PEINE FORTE ET DURE*, as it is termed in the law-books, was a barbarous mode of torture formerly inflicted upon contumacious criminals, who refused to plead when brought to trial, or declined to name their accomplices. By an act passed in 1772 it was abolished, and culprits who now object to plead, are deemed guilty, and sentenced accordingly. (Vide No. 3, p. 20.)

One of the last felons who underwent this operation in England, was a man named William Spiggott, the execution of whose sentence is depicted in the above cut. Spiggott, the child of a poor couple at Hereford, was born in 1692, and at the usual age was apprenticed to a cabinet-maker, with whom he remained seven years, when having acquired a knowledge of the trade, he repaired to London, with the view of establishing himself in business. Here he married, and falling into difficulties, became connected with a gang of housebreakers and highwaymen, whose occupation he pursued for several years, till at length he suffered death for the offence here described.

In company with a man named Phillips, one Lindsay a reprobate clergyman, and a crackbrained fellow called Burroughs, he robbed a Mr. Sybbald, on Fenchley Common, of 15 guineas and some silver. They got clear off with their booty, and might possibly have escaped detection, but a few days after, the simpleton Burroughs publicly talked of the affair, in consequence of which they were apprehended, and brought to trial, when it appeared in evidence that Spiggott, Lindsay, and Phillips, had committed above a hundred highway robberies together. However, when they were placed at the bar, Spiggott refused to plead, and the Court finding that he remained obstinate, passed the following judgment:—

"The prisoner shall be sent to the prison from whence he came, and put into a mean room, stopped from the light, and shall be laid there on the bare ground, without any litter, straw, or other covering, and without any garment about him, except something to hide his privy members. He shall lie upon his back, his head shall be covered, and his feet shall be bare. One of his arms shall be drawn with

a cord to one side of the room, and the other arm to the other side; and his legs shall be served in like manner. Then shall be laid upon his body as much iron and stone as he can bear, and more. And the first day after, he shall have three morsels of barley-bread, without any drink: and the second day, he shall be allowed to drink as much as he can at three times of the water that is next the prison-door, except running water, without any bread; and this shall be his diet till he dies. And he against whom this judgment shall be given, forfeits his goods to the king."

This brutal sentence having been pronounced, Spiggott was taken back to Newgate, and bore 350 pounds' weight on his breast for half an hour without complaint; but 50 more being added, he was unable to endure the pressure, and therefore prayed that he might be released, and taken back to plead. The court granted him this indulgence, though the strict letter of the law forbade it, and sentence of death was passed in the usual manner. Spiggott appears to have been of a most obdurate nature, for on his way to the place of execution, he told the ordinary that he had never shed a tear but once in his life, and that was when he took leave of his wife and children in Newgate. He and Phillips were hung at Tyburn, 8th February, 1721. Lindsay the clergyman, who had been admitted as King's evidence, received a pardon; and Burroughs the lunatic was confined for life in Bedlam.

• A DESERTED MANSION.

MR. ARCHER, a gentleman of about 10,000*l.* per annum, chiefly landed property in Berkshire, and partly in Essex, died some years ago, and left a very large fortune, great part of which he gave to his wife, but the bulk went to his daughters by a former marriage. Mr. Archer was a singular character—possessed of a princely fortune, with the controuling influence in Berkshire, for which he might at any time have been returned

to Parliament, if he chose; he lived in great retirement with his wife, a lady whose character we shall not examine, observing only, that she did not mix with society. Mr. Archer had a noble mansion in Berkshire, where he kept up a suitable establishment, and where his daughters lived, but he never resided there himself. He occupied a less ostentatious house in the neighbourhood, almost wholly confining himself to the society of his wife. And yet he was a social pleasant companion over the bottle, and usually drove out in a coach and six, with out-riders.

He frequently visited Bristol Hotwells, but never mixed in company. Besides his house in Berkshire, he had a fine mansion on his beautiful estate of Coopersale, near Epping. But this house had been deserted for 20 years or more, no one being allowed to reside in it. On the death of Mr. Archer, it fell to the lot of his daughter, the elegant Mrs. Houlton, who, a few weeks after, sent a surveyor to examine the house. His report was curious. Neither the gates of the court-yard, or the doors of the mansion-house, had been opened for the period of eighteen years. The latter, by order, were covered with plates of iron. The court-yard was crowded with thistles, docks, and weeds; and the inner hall with cobwebs. The rooks and jack-daws had built their nests in the chimnies, and the solemn bird of night had taken possession of the principal drawing-room. Several of the rooms had not been opened for 25 years. The pigeons had, for the space of near twenty years, built their nests in the library (which contained some thousand books), having made a lodgment, through the means of an aperture in the casement. The pond in the garden contained an immense quantity of fish of extraordinary size. A strict injunction was also laid on the bailiff and gardener, not to destroy any of the weeds about the grounds, till this extraordinary wilderiness had been inspected by the relatives of the deceased.

THE MANIAC.

It is impossible to conceive that any mental suffering arising from fear could exceed that experienced by the traveller whose adventure is the subject of this article. There was no illusion in it, all was real: yet in him the horror of a supernatural enemy superseded all dread of a mortal assassin, which his midnight intruder might have been supposed to have proved. Monsieur de Conange, on a wandering excursion which he was making with a friend through the French provinces, found it necessary one night to take refuge from a storm, in an inn which had little else to recommend it but that the host was well known to Monsieur de Conange. This man had all the inclination in the world to accommodate the travellers to their satisfaction, but unfortunately he possessed not the power. The situation was desolate, and the few chambers the house contained were already occupied by other travellers. There remained unengaged only a single parlour on the ground floor, with a closet adjoining, with which, inconvenient as they were, Monsieur de Conange and his friend were obliged to content themselves. The closet was prepared with a very uninviting bed for the latter, while they supped together in the parlour, where it was decided Monsieur de Conange was to sleep. As they purposed departing very early in the morning, they soon retired to their separate beds, and ere long fell into a profound sleep. Short, however, had been Monsieur de Conange's repose, when he was disturbed by the voice of his fellow traveller, crying out that something was strangling him!—Though he heard his friend speak to him, he could not for some time sufficiently rouse himself from his drowsiness to awaken to a full sense of the words his friend had uttered. That it was in a voice of distress he now perfectly understood, and he called anxiously to enquire what was the matter—no answer was returned, no sound was heard—all was still as death! Now seriously alarmed, Mon-

sieur de Conange threw himself out of bed, and taking up his candle, proceeded to the closet. What was his horror and astonishment when he beheld his friend lying senseless beneath the strangling grasp of a dead man loaded with chains! The cries of distress which this dreadful sight called forth soon brought the host to his assistance, whose fear and astonishment acquitted him of being in any way an actor in the tragic scene before them. It was, however, a more pressing duty to endeavour to recover the senseless traveller, than to unravel the mysterious event which had reduced him to that state. The barber of the village was therefore immediately sent for; and in the mean time they extricated the traveller from the grasp of the man, whose hand had in death closed on his throat with a force which rendered it difficult to unclench. While performing this, they happily ascertained that the spark of life still faintly glowed in the heart of the traveller, although wholly fled from that of his assaulter. The operation of bleeding, which the barber now arrived to perform, gave that spark new vigour, and he was shortly put to bed out of danger, and left to all that could now be of service to him—repose.

Monsieur de Conange then felt himself at liberty to satisfy his curiosity in developing the cause of this strange adventure, which was quickly effected by his host. This man informed him that the deceased was his groom, who had within a few days exhibited such strong proofs of mental derangement, as to render it absolutely necessary to use coercive measures to prevent his either doing mischief to himself or others, and that he had in consequence been confined and chained in the stables; but that it was evident his fetters had proved too weak to resist the strength of frenzy, and that in liberating himself, he had passed through a little door, imprudently left unlocked, which led from the saddle room into the closet in which the traveller slept, and had entered it to die with such frightful effects upon his bed.

When in the course of a few days Monsieur de Conange's friend was able to converse, he acknowledged that never in his life had he suffered so much, and that he was confident, had he not fainted, madness must have been the consequence of a prolonged state of terror.

Interesting Varieties.

WEDLOCK.

CERTAIN RULES TO DISCOVER MARRIED COUPLES IN LARGE SOCIETIES OR IN PUBLIC.

1. If you see a gentleman and lady disagree upon trifling occasions, or correcting each other in company, you may be assured they have tied the matrimonial noose: or

2. If you see a silent pair in a hackney or any other coach, lolling carelessly, one at each window, without seeming to know they have a companion, the sign is infallible: or

3. If you see a lady drop her glove, and a gentleman by the side of her kindly telling her to pick it up, you need not hesitate forming your opinion: or

4. If you see a lady presenting a gentleman with any thing carelessly, her head inclined another way, and speaking with indifference: or

5. If you meet a couple in the fields, the gentleman twenty yards in advance of the lady, who perhaps is getting over a stile with difficulty, or picking her way through a muddy path: or

6. If you see a lady, whose beauty and accomplishments attract the attention of every gentleman in the room but one, you can have no difficulty in determining their relationship to each other—that one is her husband: or

7. If you see a gentleman particularly courteous, obliging, and good natured, relaxing into smiles, saying smart things, and toying with every pretty woman in the room, excepting one, to whom he appears particularly reserved, cold, and formal, and is un-

reasonably cross—who that one is, nobody can be at a loss to discover: or

8. If you see a young or an old couple jarring, checking, or patting on the cheek, and thwarting each other, differing in opinion before the opinion is expressed, or the capitulation written; eternally anticipating or breaking the thread of each other's discourse, yet using kind words, like honey bubbles floating on vinegar, which are soon overwhelmed by the preponderance of the fluid; they are, to all intents, man and wife! it is impossible to be mistaken.

The rules above quoted are laid down as infallible. In just interpretation, they may be resorted to with confidence; they are upon unerring principles, and deduced from every day's experience.

RESTITUTION.

IN 1814, when the allied troops occupied the Bressan, five of their officers entered a chateau, the owner of which was absent. His servants gave them some refreshments. In the mean time the master of the house arrived, and after apologising to his guests for their not having met with a reception suitable to their rank, invited them to a splendid dinner. Some excellent wine being served up, one of the officers asked the master of the house whether that was the best in his cellar. The latter replied without hesitation, it was. "I am, however, convinced," replied the officer, "that you have still better." This incredulity displeased: he was invited to visit the cellar, and accepted the offer. The officer asked for a pick-axe, removed some casks, struck against the wall, and an opening soon appeared, which led into a small secret cellar, where were concealed several casks of wine of the highest value. "Did I not tell you, sir," said the officer, "that there was better wine in your cellar than that which you gave us at dinner?" "Sir," replied the owner of the cellar, "I give you my word of honour that I had no knowledge of this secret place. I purchased this chateau without having any suspicion

of such a vault." "I can readily believe you," said the officer, "because it was I myself who caused it to be constructed, in order to secrete my most valuable property from those who might possess my chateau during my emigration; and to prove it to you, you have only to dig in the cellar, and you will there find gold, silver, plate, and other valuables which belong to me, and which you have not purchased. I hope you will permit me to take them away." "Nothing can be more fair," replied the owner of the cellar: "that property had no existence for me." The officer loaded two baggage carts with them, and departed, after thanking the host for his honest entertainment.

DISAGREEABLE SURPRISE.

About twenty years ago, the servant of a Mr. Stapleton, at a village near Sittingbourne, in Kent, being left alone in the house, the family having gone on a visit to a friend, in the Isle of Sheepy, was awakened about twelve o'clock at night, by the noise of thieves breaking into the house. She immediately arose, and going to the window, discovered two men endeavouring to force the window shutters of the ground floor. She called out to them, and asked what they wanted. They replied, "they knew the family was from home, and insisted on having whatever plate and valuables her master was possessed of," adding, "that if she made a noise, they would blow her brains out." She told them there was no occasion to threaten her, for she had long determined on revenging herself on her master, and that if they would wait, she would throw the plate out of the window to them. In a few minutes she appeared at the window with a silver tankard, which she had in the interval nearly filled with aqua fortis belonging to her master: she desired them both to stand directly underneath the window, and endeavour to catch it, as it was full of dollars and curious pieces her master had collected. The thieves put themselves in the attitude to receive the prize, when she emptied the con-

tents full in their faces. The agony the poor wretches were instantly thrown into, can only be conceived by those who are acquainted with the effects of this burning liquid. They bellowed out re-venge, swearing with dreadful imprecations as they went away, they would return and set fire to the house. The girl, however, followed up this stratagem by alarming her neighbours, some of whom kept watch during the remainder of the night, but she saw no more of the robbers or their companions, nor were they ever traced or heard of.

ANCIENT AND MODERN CUSTOMS.

In the Northumberland household book for 1512, we are informed that a thousand pounds was the sum annually expended in housekeeping.—This maintained 166 persons; and wheat was then 5s. 8d. per quarter. The family rose at six in the morning; my lord and lady had set on their table for breakfast, at seven o'clock in the morning, a quart of beer, a quart of wine, two pieces of salt fish, half a dozen red herrings, four white ones, and a dish of sprats. They dined at ten, and supped at four in the afternoon. The gates were all shut at nine, and no further ingress or egress permitted. (See pages 314 and 318.) But now, A. D. 1823,

The gentleman who dines the latest
Is, in our streets, esteemed the greatest.
But surely greater than them all
Is he who never dines at all!

A wag, on being told it was the fashion to dine later and later every day, said, "He supposed it would end at last in not dining till to-morrow!"

CURIOUS LETTER.

Copy of a letter sent by the parish clerk of Welbury to the Lord Chancellor, during a vacancy to the living, about sixty years ago:—

"Me Lorde—I nowe set aboute to rite these lines to you, that i, Michael Meek, has been the parrish clarke of Welbrery, nere Northallerton, for

these twenty five yeres by past, and hear is nowe a long' time since our ould Rector Parson Dawson dyed, and we doe not nowe who is toe bee our nue Rector, but whomever me Lord pleses to give it toe, it is aboute £180 poundes it yere ; and i can say, and say trewly, that i never made thre poundes it yere for my job ; so whomever me Lord pleses to give it toe, there is one thing me Lord can doe, i think, to let em have it upon this previser, that they allow the said Michael Meek ten pounds it yere out of it, and there will remain £170 poundes it yere for 't nue parson ; for in such a liveing as onrs, i think there is brede bothe for parson and clarke—I is a wever by tread, that never had any thing but harde labore to worke for my Brede, and is now in the 66 yere of my age, and hath but one Iye in my hede, for it is turn-ed of ten yeres since, i quite lost seight of my rite Iye, wile i was pairing my fathers toes nailes ; unhappeley a splinter did hit upon the senter of my rite Iye, and intirely blinded it, so that if i had but the ten poundes it yere for my job out of the liveing, what a heapl it would be to me in my ould age ; and altho i be but clarke of the parish, i is nere akin to the blak cotes, for my grete granfather was the Rector of Smeton, and appleton on Wiske, an Richmon al in Yorkshire, for 45 yeres ; it was King Charley the Second that made my grete granfather a preasant of al these plases, and he was chaplin to one squire oggethorpe of bedel, so that to look to the lenth of 60 or 70 yeres back, owers was of as high a family as was in ower countree, and my gran-mother Meek had thre owne cussins that were brothers, one of em was Parlamant man for Lundun, and one a barbado marchant ; there names was heyshams ; and me Lorde, there is now, at this time, about £100 poundes in our church-maisters handes wolly for me Lorde to doe what he pleases with. i is

"your Lordships vary umble sarvant,
"MICHAEL MEEK."

"To me Rite onarable the lorde
Chancellor of England, Lundun."

ALBUMANIA.

CONUNDRUMS.

MR. EDITOR,—If you think the in-closed Conundrums BAD enough to cause a laugh among your numerous readers their absurdities are at your service.

SIC-SAG.

1. Why is a man standing on a fishmonger's shop like a busy meddling fellow?

Because he's over-a-fish-house. (Over Officious.)

2. Why would you send a dull man to Croydon?

Because it's the way to Brighton (Brighton.)

3. Why is the devil riding on the back of a mouse, like one and the same thing?

Because 'tis Sin-on-a-mouse. (Syn-nonomous.)

4. Why is a drop of ink on the side of a rat like a thoughtless man?

Because 'tis ink-on-side-a-rat. (In-considerate.)

5. Why is a young devil peeping over a shed, like a poor man?

Because 'tis imp-over-shed. (Im-poverished.)

6. Why is a sick cat and a mouse like a coward?

Because 'tis puss-ill-and-a-mouse. (Pusillanimous)

7. Why is your sweetheart in a garret like a thought?

Because 'tis a High-Dear. (Idea.)

8. Why is an idea like the Atlantic?

Because 'tis an ocean. (a notion)

9. What animal must be named to a pig who is ill, to express his melancholy situation?

Pork, you pine. (Porcupine.)

The Wit's Nunchion.

PLEASANT INTELLIGENCE.—A country lass coming up to town to seek her fortune, had the good luck to be hired by an old rich mercer, who was a bachelor, and whom she pleased so well, that at last he married her. Her brother Dick, who was a downright honest ploughman, hearing of his sister's promotion, put on his holiday cloaths, took up his quarter's wages, and came to London: and knowing

the street by the direction of a letter, though not the house, enquired from door to door for his sister Joan, who had lately married her master; till at last he was so lucky to find the right, where he was highly welcomed. Being at dinner, the old mercer said, "Well, brother-in-law, as I now must call you, I am glad to see you, or any of my wife's relations; she has been a good servant to me, and I hope she will make as good a wife: we have a plentiful estate, and all I wish is a child to inherit it, which yet we have no hopes of." At this, Dick, looking wistfully at his sister, bluntly cried, "How now, Joan; what, art thou turned a barren sow in London? thou was not wont to be so in the country!" And though she frowned, beckoned, and made signs for him to hold his peace, still he went on. "Well, brother," continued he, "as for an heir, you need not trouble yourself about that; for she has a thumping boy in the country, got by Will. Dobs, her master's thresher; and the parish would be glad enough to be discharged of it!"

OLDYS, the historian, having been for several years in the Fleet Prison, contracted such habits and connections there, that, when he was at length enlarged, he made it a frequent practice to spend his evenings there, and lodge with some friend all night. Rapping at the door one night, rather late, the keeper reprimanded him for giving him such constant trouble, adding, that, "though he had a great regard for him, yet if he kept such hours in future, he must be under the necessity of **LOCKING HIM OUT**."

SERVICEABLE IMPOSTURE.—A mate of a merchant ship, who was pressed some years ago, made use of the following ingenious stratagem to evade being carried from the tender on board a man of war. The night before the pressed men were to be removed, he scratched himself all over his legs, hands, and a great part of his body, so as to cause the blood to follow in many places. On the morrow, when

the poor fellows were all called out of their confinement below, he took care to be the last; and just as they were going to put him over the vessel's side, he entreated the favour to speak but one word to the commanding officer; which being granted, he begged, in the most piteous manner, that he would be pleased to order him aboard some ship where there was an extraordinary good surgeon; "for I have had the misfortune, sir," said he, "to have a most inveterate itch (skewing his hands, breast, and legs), upon me these six months; and notwithstanding I have been under the care of several doctors, and been in two hospitals, I cannot obtain a cure; and I fear if I go to sea with it upon me, that, having only salt provisions, I shall lose my life." The officer, after viewing him with some attention, and cursing the gang for bringing such a scabby fellow on board, bid them turn him ashore, for he would not send him at all, lest he should infect the whole ship's company.

PHILLIPS—Another anecdote of the shifts and inventions to which the Thespian tribe have frequently resorted from time immemorial, is given by Chetwood in his account of William Phillips, who was a Harlequin of much celebrity. It is as follows:—"This great man was taken up in London for debt, and dealt with the honest officer in the following manner. He first called for liquor in abundance, and treated all about him, to the no small joy of the bailiff, who was rejoiced to have a calf that bled so well. Harlequin made the bailiff believe he had six dozen of wine ready packed up, which he would send for, to drink while in custody; and would likewise allow him sixpence a bottle, for permission to drink it in his own chamber. Shoulder-dab listened to the proposal with pleasure; went to the place as directed; and was rejoiced to hear the wine should be sent in the morning early. Accordingly it came by a porter, sweating under his load; the turnkey, upon this, called to his master, telling him the porter and hamper were come in. 'Very well,'

says he: "then let nothing but the porter and hamper out."—The porter performed his part very well; went heavily in with an empty hamper, and lightly out with Phillips on his back. He was dis-hampered at an ale-house near the water-side; crossed the Thames; and soon after embarked for Ireland. He was very fond of this trick, and would take pride in his project, which was contrived long before he was taken, to be ready on an emergency. When the scheme was concerted with the porter, he made this threatening speech to him:—"God strike me plump! (his usual oath) if you are not as secret as the Sun at noon-day, I'll broil you, and eat you alive, you dog!"

TRUE ENGLISH FEELING.—A small farmer in the vicinity of Manchester, some time ago, killed a cow, and sent part of the beef, and a quantity of suet, to his son, a weaver in Blackley, who hung it up so near to the window, that some one in the night broke a pane, and carried off the suet. In the morning the weaver, missing his suet, went to the ale-house, where he pasted up the following advertisement, which still remains, an evidence of the right John Bull generosity and spirit!—"Whereas, last night, a quantity of beef suet was taken from the house of Thomas Wolstonecroft—this is to give notice, that if the person who took it away will appear and prove that he was forced to do so by distress, the said Thomas Wolstonecroft will give him a dozen of flour to make the suet into dumplings. But if he cannot prove that he was in distress when he stole it, the said Thomas Wolstonecroft will fight him, and give him five shillings if he beats him."

BARBER v. SWEEP.

Young Nick, within a barber's shop,
The chimney had been sweeping,
And having done his swarthy job,
Was backward down a creeping.

Whilst tying up his bag of soot,
A waggish shaving blade,
Exclaim'd, "may I presume to ask
What was your father's trade?"
"What trade!" quoth sweep; "why to
my shame,
And chagrin be it spoken,
My father was a barber, sir,
How curiously provoking!
I might have been a barber too,
And his own sphere have play'd in;
But, the truth to say, I did not like
A business so degrading."

GENESQ SANTO.

Gossiping.—As many able politicians are at present much engaged on subjects of police and reform we would remind them, that in 1457 a proclamation was issued by Henry VIII. "that women should not meet together to babble and talk; and that all men should keep their wives in their houses."

A MERCHANT being attacked by some thieves so early as five in the evening: "Gentlemen," said he, "you open shop early to-day."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We can assure T. G.—d that the neglect he complains of was not intentional; the fact is, the Answers to Correspondents are generally written on Monday or Tuesday, and therefore letters received after those days are seldom noticed in the number of the following Saturday. Pic Nic's Extract from Addison shall be inserted. D.'s amended poem the very first opportunity. We are glad to find that he has sense enough to profit by advice, instead of being offended at it. Thalia [D.] has our thanks: the several articles shall appear. We are busily engaged in making selections from the American Journals, and the first fruits of our industry will display themselves in a week or two.

RECEIVED.—Jago, T. P., Simplex, Jonathan, L. L. C., Sarah, Newt, and Pero.

REJECTED.—Apex, T., Philo, and J. R.

THE NIG-NAG;

OR,

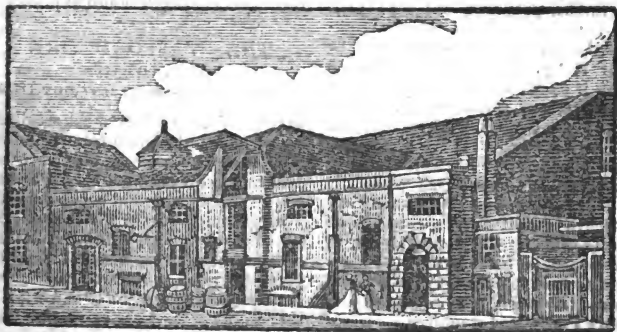
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 46.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it." —SHAKESPEARE.



GARRICK'S THEATRE, GOODMAN'S FIELDS.

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE, SECTION 14. We have now seen the two grand companies established at Drury Lane and Covent Garden; and the history of these theatres from the period at which this final arrangement took place, comprises nearly the complete history of the drama. However, before we proceed with our principal detail, it will be necessary to touch upon the rise of one or two establishments of minor importance; such as the Haymarket, and the theatre formerly standing in Alie Street, Goodman's Fields.

The latter house was commenced as a speculation in the year 1728, by one Odell, who converted a throwster's shop into a theatre. Much opposition was made to his scheme amongst the citizens, who apprehended the utter ruin of their servants' and apprentices' morals by this introduction of theatrical entertainments in their vicinity. Odell, however, persevered; completed the theatre; collected a company; and commenced his operations without license, with

such success, that for some time he cleared a hundred pounds per week by the undertaking. The citizens, however, did not abandon their opposition; and after a year or two he was obliged to quit his lucrative speculation, by which means he was upon the whole a considerable loser.

The unfortunate issue of Odell's plan was not sufficient to deter another adventurer from embarking in a similar undertaking. His name was Henry Gifford, a man who had long been connected with the theatres in one way or another. This was before the passing of the playhouse bill, when to procure a license for dramatic entertainments was not a matter of such difficulty as at present. He accordingly projected a scheme for demolishing the old house, and building a new one on a more splendid scale, by a subscription of 100*l*. each from twenty-three persons; each shareholder to be allowed a free admission ticket, and also 1*s*. 6*d*. for every night of performance. The subscription was speedily filled; the theatre erected,

and opened on the 2nd October, 1733, with the "First Part of Henry IV."

The dislike of the citizens, however, to the toleration of dramatic performances in their neighbourhood, had by no means diminished. During the erection of the new edifice, it was evinced by various attempts to prevent its further progress; and shortly after it was opened, an order was obtained from the Lord Chamberlain to shut it up. Gifford, nevertheless kept it open, in defiance of this injunction; and continued the performances for two or three seasons; but we may presume that the citizens became too powerful for him to sustain a long combat, for in the year 1736 he hired the house in Portugal Street, rendered vacant by the removal of Rich's company to Covent Garden, as mentioned in Section 13, and managed to keep it open for two or three years. He then returned to Goodman's Fields, and employed a curious subterfuge to defeat his opponents in that quarter. Not being allowed to act plays for money, he advertised a Concert "at the LATE Theatre," between the acts of which, "a society of gentlemen and ladies would give dramatic performances, gratuitously, for their own diversion," and strange as it may appear, this mode of quibbling with the authority of the Lord Chamberlain met with little or no opposition, but appears to have been either unnoticed or winked at. It was during this state of affairs that Garrick made his first appearance in London at this house, on the 19th October, 1741, as Richard the Third, being styled in the bills, "a gentleman who never before appeared on any stage." He immediately attracted immense crowds to this remote quarter of the town; but at the end of the season he accepted an engagement at Drury Lane, and the house was soon after abandoned.

The theatre, of which the foregoing print (copied from a drawing in the British Museum) presents a correct view, stood near the western extremity of Great Alie Street, Goodman's Fields, on the northern side. When the edifice was abandoned by the players, it was converted to other

purposes; and on the 2nd June, 1802, was totally destroyed by fire. It was then occupied as a cotton and coffee warehouse. On its site has been erected a large building, the property of Messrs. Craven and Bowman, sugar-bakers. It is still known in the neighbourhood by the name of the Playhouse — (Resumed at p. 377.)

THE STAFFORDSHIRE COLLIERIES.

(FROM KNIGHT'S MAGAZINE, OCT. 1823)

MANY of my readers must recollect crossing, in the route from London to Holyhead, a miserable tract of country, commencing a few miles beyond Birmingham, and continuing to Wolverhampton. If the volumes of sulphureous vapour, which I shall not compliment with the name of smoke, permitted them at intervals to "view the dismal situation waste and wild," they would observe the surface of the desert around them scarred and broken, as if it had just reposed from the heavings of an earthquake. Now and then they would shudder as they passed the mouth of a deserted mine, left without any guard but the wariness of the passenger. Sometimes they would see a feeble and lambent flame (called by the miners the wild-fire) issue from chaps in the parched earth. It is self-kindled by a process familiar to the chemist, and feeds on gas evolved by the refuse of the coal, that has been left in immense caverns, hollowed by the labours of ages, over which the carriage of the unconscious traveller rolls for many miles. They would be struck also with the sight of houses from which the treacherous foundations have gradually shrunk, leaving them in such a state of obliquity with the horizon, as if they stood only to evince the contempt of themselves and their inhabitants for the laws of gravitation.

If the traveller, in addition to these attacks on his organs of smell and vision, has nerve to inspect more closely the tremendous operations which are going on around him, as far as the eye can reach, he must learn to endure the grating of harsh wheels, the roaring of enormous bellows

which, set in motion by the power of steam, urge the fires of the smelting furnace till they glow with almost the white brilliance of the noon-day sun. He must learn to care little for the sparks which fly from the half-molten iron, under the action of the forge, in torrents of burning rain; while the earth literally trembles beneath the strokes of a mightier hammer than Thor himself ever wielded against the giants.

But my present business is with the human part of the spectacle. The miners, or, as they call themselves, the colliers, are a curious race of men, and the study of their natural history would be replete with information and entertainment. Their figures are tall and robust in no ordinary degree; but their faces, when, by any accident, the coating of black dirt in which they are cased is partially rubbed off, shew ghastly pale, and even at an early age they are ploughed in the deepest furrows. Their working dress consists of a tunic, or short frock, and trousers of coarse flannel. Their holiday clothes are generally of cotton-velvet, or velveteen, as I believe the drapers call it, decorated with a profusion of shining metal buttons; but they seem principally to pique themselves on their garters, which are made of worsted, and very gay in colour: these they tie on, so that a great part, as if by accident, appears below the knee. Their labour is intense. They stand, sit, or crouch, for hours, often in the most irksome posture, undermining rocks of coal with a pickaxe. Not unfrequently they are crushed beneath the weight of the surper-incumbent mass, or suffocated by a deleterious exhalation, which they call by the expressive name of the Choke Damp;* and sometimes they are scorched by the explosion of the hydrogen which is generated in the depths of the mine,—a disaster from which the beautiful invention of Sir Humphrey Davy, the Safety Lamp, does not always preserve them. The evil is not, however, attributable to any imperfection in the instrument, but to the astonishing recklessness of the men, who are

with difficulty prevailed upon to observe the plainest and most simple directions, even in matters of life and death.

The high cheek-bones and the dialect of these people, seem to argue them of northern descent. Perhaps in some remote age they may have swarmed from the Northumbrian hive, to seize on the riches of the less adventurous or intelligent Southrons. Be that as it may, they have clearly no similarity, either in speech or feature, with the peasantry of the neighbouring district. They have also manners and customs peculiar to themselves. One in particular is the non-observance, or at least the very irregular observance, of the common rule for the transmission of the surname. What rule they follow I cannot say; but it often happens that a son has a surname very different from that of his father. Sometimes a man will have two sets of names, as John Smith and Thomas Jones, and that without any intention of concealment; but, except on high occasions, as a marriage or a christening, they rarely use any appellative except the cognomen or nick-name. The Latin word is the best, because the English implies something inconsistent with the staid and regular usage of the epithet by all persons connected with the subject of it, his wife, his children, and himself included.

I knew an Apothecary in the Collieries, who, as a matter of decorum, always entered the real names of his patients in his books; that is, when he could ascertain them. But, they stood there only for ornament: for use, he found it necessary to append the soubriquet, which he did with true medical formality, as for instance, "Thomas Williams, vulgo diet. Old Puff." Serious inconvenience not unfrequently arises on occasions where it is necessary to ascertain the true name, and reduce it to writing, not only from the utter ignorance displayed by the owner of all the mysteries of spelling, but from his incapacity to pronounce the word, so as to give the slightest idea of what its orthography ought to be. Clergyraen have been known to send home a wed-

* Often, I believe, carbonic acid gas.

ding party, in despair, after a vain essay to gain from the vocal organs of the bride or bridegroom, or their friends, a sound by way of name, which any known alphabet had the power of committing to paper. The habit of using the cognomen is so common, that the miners apply the custom to strangers with an unconsciousness of offence quite classic. If a traveller is hailed by the epithet "Nosey," he should recollect that Ovid indured the same treatment in the Court of Augustus, without dreaming of an affront; and he may even flatter himself that he bears some outward resemblance to the poet.

Indeed, in all communications with persons of higher rank, the miners preserve a bold simplicity of manners far different, at least in my mind, from insolence. I recollect passing through the little town of Bilston at the time of the first abdication of Buonaparte, and being accosted by one of a groupe of colliers, who, with black faces and folded arms, were discussing the events of the day, with an interrogation, which, imitated in print, might stand thus:—"Oy say, what dost thee think o' the paice, beoots?" which, being rendered into our language, is, "I say, what dost thou think of the peace, boots?" My boots were, I suppose, that part of my dress by which I was most conspicuously distinguished from the natives. This I understood as a friendly invitation to a conference on the state of affairs, and my feelings were no more hurt by the designation bestowed on me, than those of Hercules ever were by the epithet *CLAVIGER*.

But, I had made this race of people in some sort my study. I remember once mounting rather hastily the outside of a stage-coach, which was passing through the coal district, and setting myself down in the first place that offered itself, without taking time to reconnoitre. When I had an opportunity for inspection, I found at my right an old man, with a rope coiled round him like a belt, by which my practised eye at once recognised him for a canal boatman, carrying home his towing-line. On my left sat a personage whose dress was not a

little equivocal, consisting of a man's hat and coat, with something like petticoats below. The mysterious effect of this epicene costume was heightened by the wearer's complexion, which reminded the spectator of dirty wash leather. A short pipe adorned the mouth, with which it seemed well acquainted; and the tout ensemble sat in deep silence. These diagnostics, and especially the last, might have imposed on a novice the belief that the subject of my observation was of the worthiest gender, as the grammarians uncivilly term the masculine; but, I knew my *compagnon de voyage*, at a glance, for one of the softer sex, and treated her with becoming attention. To all my politeness she returned little more than a nod and a whiff. At length, my fellow-passengers began to converse, or rather, I suppose, to resume a conversation which I had interrupted. The lady I found was of the same profession as the gentleman on the other side—a conductor of boats. They appeared not to have had much, if any, previous acquaintance, but seemed drawn together by community of sentiment and pursuit. They were soon engaged in an occupation interesting alike to all ranks of society; namely, an enquiry into the characters of their common friends. As their conversation illustrates in some degree the manners of this people, I will give a short specimen of it in the original dialect, together with a glossary for the benefit of the mere English reader:—

LADY.—Dun yo know Soiden-mouth* Tummy?

GENTLEMAN.—Ees: an' a 'deation good fellow he is, tew.

LADY.—A desput quoit† mon! But he loves a sup o' drink. Dun yo know his woiſ?

GENTLEMAN.—Know her! Ay! Her's the very devil when her sperit's up.

LADY.—Her is. Her uses that mon sheamful—her rage‡ him every neet§ of her loif.

GENTLEMAN.—Her does. Oive known her come into the public,|| and call him all the neames her could lay her tongue

* With the mouth aside. † Desperately quiet. ‡ Scolds outrageously. § Night.

|| Public-house.

tew, afore all the company. Her oughts to stay till her's got him i' the boat, and then her mit say what her'd a moind. But, her taks aiter her feyther.

LADY.—Hew was her feyther?

GENTLEMAN.—Whoy, singing Jemmy.

LADY.—Oi dont think as how I ever know'd singing Jemmy. Was he owd Soaker's brother?

GENTLEMAN.—Ees, he was. He lived a-top o' Hell Bonk. He was the wickedest, swearinst mon as ever I know'd. I should think as how he was the wickedest mon i' the wold, and say he had the rheumatiz so bad.

Many anecdotes might be collected to shew the great difficulty of discovering a person in the Collieries, without being in possession of his nickname. The following I received from a respectable attorney. During his clerkship he was sent to serve some legal process on a man, whose name and address were given him with legal accuracy. He traversed the village to which he had been directed, from end to end, without success; and, after spending many hours in the search, was about to abandon it in despair, when a young woman, who had witnessed his labours, kindly undertook to make inquiries for him, and began to hail her friends for that purpose:

"Oi say, Bullyed, dost thee know a mon neamed Adam Green?"

The Bull-head was shaken, in sign of ignorance.

"Loy-a-bed, dost thee?"

Lie-a-bed's opportunities of making acquaintance had been rather limited, and she could not resolve the difficulty.

Stumpy (a man with a wooden leg), Cowskin, Spindle-shanks, Cock-eye, Pig-tail, and Yellow-belly, were severally invoked, but in vain, and the querist fell into a brown study, in which she remained for some time. At length, however, her eyes suddenly brightened, and slapping one of her companions on the shoulder, she exclaimed, triumphantly, "Dash my wig! whoy he means my feyther!" and then, turning to the gentleman, she added, "Yo should'n. ax'd for owd Blackbird!"*

Now and then, but not very frequently, groups of these children of nature may be seen wandering about the streets of Birmingham, with much the same sensations as the Indians experience at New York or Philadelphia. It was at Birmingham that the Roscio-mania, as Lord Byron calls it, first broke out, and in a few weeks, indistinct rumours of young Betty's fame caught some ears even in the coal-mines. One man, more curious or more idle than his fellows, determined to leave his work, and see the prodigy with his own eyes; and having so resolved, he proceeded, although in the middle of the week, to put on a clean shirt and a clean face, and would even have anticipated the Sunday's shaving, but he was preserved from such extravagance by the motive which prevented Mrs. Gilpin from allowing the chaise to draw up to her door on the eventful morning of her journey,—

lest all

Should say that she was proud.

But, notwithstanding this moderation, he did not pass unobserved. The unwonted hue of his shirt and face, were portents not to be disregarded; and he had no sooner taken the road to Birmingham, than he was met by an astonished brother, whose amazement, when at last it found vent in words, produced the following dialogue:—"Oi say, sirree, where be' est thee gwain?"—"Oi'm agwain to Brummajunn."—"What be' est agwain there for?"—"Oi'm agwain to see the Young Rocus."—"What!"—"Oi tell thee Oi'm agwain to see the Young Rocus."—"Is it aloive?"

I ought to thank my readers (if, one by one, they have not all dropped off, before this time), for indulging me so long in my garrulity. But, I had a reason for it. I wished to preserve some sketch, while the original is yet in existence, of a race which refinement, that fell destroyer of character, has hitherto spared. Soon will these be tales of other times. The primitive simplicity even of the Collieries is threatened. Already have

* You should have ask'd for "Old Blackbird."

• Going.

the eyes of Bell and Lancaster searched out this spot of innocent seclusion; and the voice of education will ere long be heard above the wild untutored sounds which have so long charmed the ear of the traveller.

THE WALKING PYRAMID.

SIR,—If the following trifle, copied from Addison's travels in Venice, &c., is worthy your notice, pray give it a corner in your Nic-Nac.

PIC-NIC.

ON Holy-Thursdaiy, among the several shows that are yearly exhibited by the Venetians, there are none more odd and singular than the following:—There is a set of artisans, who, by the help of poles, which they lay across each other's shoulders, build themselves up into a kind of pyramid; so that you see a pile of men in the air of four or five rows, rising one above another. The weight is so equally distributed, that every man is well able to bear his part of it, the stories, if they may be so called, growing less and less as they advance higher and higher. A little boy represents the point of the pyramid, who, after a short space, leaps off, with a great deal of dexterity, into the arms of one that catches him at bottom. In the same manner the whole building falls to pieces. This pastime is mentioned in the following lines of CLAUDIAN, which show that the Venetians are not the inventors of this trick:—

"Men, piled on men, with active leaps
arise,
And build the breathing fabric to the
skies:
A sprightly youth above the topmost row
Points the tall pyramid, and crowns the
show."

MAGAZINE GLEANINGS.

AMERICAN DUELLING.—A lady of Lexington, finding her nephew not inclined to fight a duel, encouraged him to go out; and immediately on his departing for the fatal spot, said to her black servant, "John, light up, and get the large drawing-room ready for the reception of a corpse."

This order was given with great sangfroid; and, in less than an hour, the room was occupied by the corpse of her unfortunate nephew.

("Lady's.")

SKATING.—A skate has been invented, which renders this amusement independent of frost. It is like the common skate, but instead of one iron, it has two, with a set of small brass wheels let in between, which revolve, and enable the bearer to run with great rapidity on any hard, level surface, and to perform, though with less force and nicety, all the evolutions of skating. A patent has been obtained for this invention, and it is now exhibited at the Tennis-Court, in Windmill Street. ("Annals of Sporting.")

FRAGMENT.

I AM all alone by my silent hearth,
No smile of love, and no voice of mirth;
I am all alone, and my heart is sore,
With thinking of days that are past and
o'er.

I sit and watch the stately trees,
As they roll and murmur in the breeze:
Or follow the clouds as they fleet and
play,
But my heart—my heart is far away.

My thoughts are wandering fast and
wide,
Without an aim, and without a guide.
("Knight's Magazine.")

THE MONUMENT, on Fish Street Hill, when first built, was used as an observatory, but was abandoned on account of its vibrations preventing the nicety required. This occasioned a report that it was unsafe, an idea which exists in some degree to this day, but its scientific construction may bid defiance to the attacks of every thing but an earthquake, for centuries to come.—("Gentleman's.")

Interesting Varieties.

THE DEAD ALIVE.

A LETTER from an English gentleman, dated Bavaria, December 18,

1818, contained the following remarkable statement:—

We have witnessed here a superb funeral of the Baron Hornstein, a Courtier; but the result is what induces me to mention it in my letter. Two days after, the workmen entered the Mausoleum, when they witnessed an object which petrified them! At the door of the sepulchre lay a body covered with blood—it was the mortal remains of this favourite of Courts and Princes. The Baron was buried alive! On recovering from his trance he had forced the lid off the coffin, and endeavoured to escape from the charnal house—it was impossible! and therefore, in a fit of desperation, as it is supposed, he dashed his brains out against the wall. The Royal Family, and indeed the whole city, are plunged in grief at the horrid catastrophe."

• A MAN fell into the Thames—he struggled, and endeavoured to swim, but he swam badly. Will he reach the bank? Will he be drowned? Here was at once a wager. Twenty guineas were laid that he would save himself—this was taken; the bets increased and multiplied; and in two minutes considerable sums were depending on the head of the poor swimmer. He was, however, perceived by some watermen, who rowed towards him, with the intention of saving him. "There is a bet, there is a bet," was bawled out from every quarter. At these magical words the boatmen stopped, the unfortunate man was drowned, and the bet was gained."

CALCUTTA AND ST. PETERSBURGH.

It is little known, because it can have happened to very few to have had an opportunity to make the observation, that St. Petersburg and Calcutta, two cities placed at the opposite extremities of the habitable part of our hemisphere, and at so great distance from each other, have a close resemblance in the character of their plan and appearance, and that there is no other city which resembles either. A person who had seen Calcutta, waking suddenly on the first day of his arrival,

in one of the finest stations and apartments of St. Petersburg, at the early sunrise of that fine Summer climate, thought he was again on the banks of the great and rapid Ganges, and not of the clear, smooth Neva. Both cities stand on a flat alluvial soil; the buildings of both, large and white, the alignments broad and strait, with spacious open squares; the houses of both have the air of palaces; both cities cover a large space; the St. Neufsky-street, at St. Petersburg, is, in a right line from the Admiralty, three miles and a quarter in length, terminating by the Cathedral of St. Neufsky. The character of all the ancient cities of Europe, London, Paris, and the rest, is that of a fortress; the greatest quantity of building, crowded close into the smallest space, with walls, gates, and ditches of defence: the modern and noble capitals of St. Petersburg and of Calcutta, in the altered condition of human society, have not required this lamentable caution, but have a plan of spread and extension, unrestrained by military limitation. A Russian nobleman asking an English stranger at St. Petersburg, "What, sir, do you think, '*de notre Ville precece*?' " was answered by the Englishman, that he had never thought to give it such a designation, though really a plant of a forced growth, but had considered and described it as "*la Ville, bel enfant de cent ans*." St. Petersburg and Calcutta are of nearly the same date of establishment, about one century only.

THE following curious circumstance, respecting the Armed Neutrality, is stated as a fact. When our ambassador at the court of Petersburg, (Sir James Harris,) discovered, that attempts were making to induce the Empress to propose the Armed Neutrality, he drew up a long memorial to counteract the project, which he gave to the Prince Potemkin, who promised to recommend it to his sovereign. Whether the British minister thought there was no need of making a mystery of so slight a circumstance, or whether Potemkin mentioned it, the partizans of the

Neutrality were soon informed of it. They immediately gained over to their a certain Mademoiselle Guibaud, a forward, shrewd young woman, who was about the neices of the Prince Potemkin, and lived on a very familiar footing with him. This girl took the paper by stealth out of the Prince's pocket, and carried it to her employers. They immediately enriched it with marginal notes, which victoriously answered all the objections of the British minister, and the writing was then successfully returned to the place from whence it had been taken. The Empress, on having the memorial for her consideration, very naturally supposed the notes had been added by the Prince Potemkin, which served only to increase her desire to unite the powers of the north in league against England. The British minister was presently after informed of the method that had been adopted of making his memorial speak against himself, and it chagrined him so much, that it brought on the jaundice, from which he did not recover for a considerable time.

The Wit's Nunchion.

THE GOOD NEIGHBOUR.—The following droll circumstance lately occurred in the north of the metropolis: A lady, probably very ignorant of what was passing in her own house, was, as she thought, and had reason to think from her unwearied vigilance, perfectly acquainted with all the domestic economy of her neighbours. It happened that, by a long and diligent observation of the proceedings in an opposite mansion occupied by a foreign nobleman, she had ascertained beyond a doubt that the footman went to bed in the maid servant's room. To be convinced of an error, and to lose no time in correcting it, is the grace of virtue. A letter, charged with these suspicions, was immediately dispatched to the Count,

who wrote her a very polite answer, stating how much he was obliged to her for the lively interest she took in the morality of his family; that he would forthwith institute an inquiry into the matter, and put a speedy end to any impropriety he might discover, but he begged leave to observe, that he had hitherto understood that it was the custom of this country for man and wife to sleep together!

AUCTIONEERING ELOQUENCE.—“Now, ladies, I offers to your attention a CAPITABLE assortment of TAY-CADDEES, beautifully HORNA-MENTED, and which I shall put up in small lots, that such ladies as be fond of TAY-TABLE HORNAMEMENTS may have an opportunity of SHOOTING themselves.”

MAJOR B—a great gambler, said to Foote, “Since I last saw you, I have LOST an eye.”—“I am sorry for it,” said Foote: “pray AT WHAT GAME?”

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The following Articles have been received, and shall appear in the course of a few weeks:—Hints to Perambulators—Address to October—Punch—Remarkable Sleepers—Royal Revels and The Breeches. In our next number we shall resume the Article on “Poetry and Poets,” and the Transatlantic Varieties. What have we done to offend Frisk? We are obliged to G. for his additions to our stock of subjects for cuts, which already includes some very curious prints, calculated to afford much amusement to our readers during the approaching long evenings. L. T. must excuse us.

RECEIVED. T.—Lex Grex—R. P. Amicus [Highgate] Lochinvar, Jago, C^{et}, and Mabel.

REJECTED. Serio-Cómico and S.

EKRATUM. P. 357, col. 2, dele “See pages 314 and 318.”

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

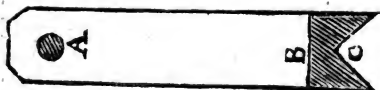
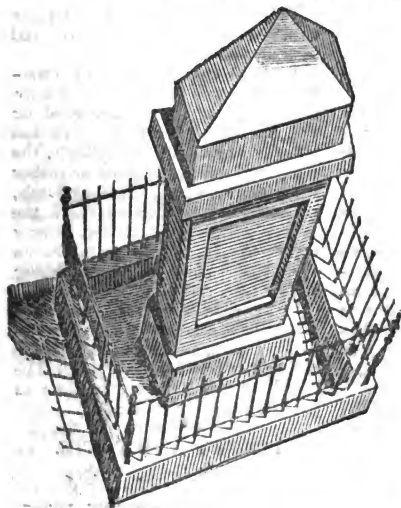
N^o. 47.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.

THE HORIZONTORIUM.



We are indebted for the above engraving, and the subjoined explanation of it, to an amusing work published weekly at Liverpool under the title of the Kaleidoscope.

"This most interesting perspective recreation, which has been recently published, appears to have excited little notice or public interest, although, in our opinion, and that also of every artist to whom we have spoken on the subject, it is the most extraordinary and pleasing optical deception ever devised. The original plan, when viewed from its proper site, exhibits to the eye a castle or fort, with turrets, palisades, a magazine, and a sentry standing outside of his box; also, the roof of a cottage on one side. When viewed from any other than one point of sight, it is difficult to ascertain what the design is intended to represent, as the walls of the castle appear to slope outwards, so that they are nearly twice as wide at the top as at the base.—The soldier and the sentry-box have a most singular effect; the former appearing a very tall figure, in height, whilst his breadth scarcely exceeds that of his musket. To produce a regular picture from this almost shapeless assemblage, all that is necessary is to view it from a certain point

with one eye only, which is best done by help of a sight made of pasteboard or card, which accompanies the original. When viewed by this means, it is impossible to describe the beautiful effect produced; it is not a picture, but reality; the castle walls and palisadoes assume their regular proportions, and their perpendicular positions;—the sentinel is reduced to proper dimensions, and the effect of light and shade is almost miraculous. The whole has the appearance not of a picture, but of an exact miniature model of the things intended to be represented.

“Although we have read much on the subject of restoring distorted images, we never experienced more surprise than when first we viewed the one we have been attempting to describe. The original is rather expensive (three shillings or four shillings, plain or coloured) and, as we were bent upon gratifying our readers with a sight of the phenomenon, we have been at no small pains to construct upon true perspective principles, the small sketch which we here present to our readers. Not wishing to infringe the copy-right of the publisher of the plan we have described, we have chosen another and more GRAVE subject; and shall proceed to describe to our readers the manner of viewing it, so as to produce the effect intended.

DIRECTIONS.

“As the effect depends entirely upon correctly placing the sight-piece, through which it is to be viewed, we have adopted a mode of describing it, which can hardly be misunderstood.—A piece of paper, or card (which is better) must be cut out, of the precise shape and height of the piece A B C; an aperture for the eye, about the size of a pea (A) must be made, precisely on the spot shown in the sight-piece. The shaded part of the sight-piece must be folded back at a right angle, so as to form a kind of foot, to stand upon. The sight-piece must then be placed perpendicularly, exactly, over the piece D. Then keeping the paper perfectly horizontal, and placing the eye close to the

aperture (A) there will be seen a perfect representation of a tombstone, surrounded by palisadoes. A little experience will give the image or model very exactly; if not, the person who makes the trial may depend upon it that he has not placed the sight-piece correctly. The light ought to fall on the side of the figure opposite the shadow.

“If the representation of the sight-piece A B C is found to interfere with the picture, it may be covered with a small piece of paper.

We have only to add that the person who makes this experiment may know whether he has succeeded or not, by this simple test. If he has followed our directions implicitly, the sketch will exhibit a figure, or rather the model, of a regular oblong tomb, surrounded by palisadoes. If the form is not perfectly regular, he may depend upon it that he has not taken the proper mode of accomplishing the purpose.

“In conclusion: Especial care should be had that the paper be perfectly smooth, as the slightest wrinkle will distort the figure materially. The eye must also be placed as close as possible to the sight-hole.”

POETRY AND POETS.

NO. III.

LORD BYRON, when very young, was placed under the guardianship of a Mr. Wh—te, an eminent solicitor, who, by a singular coincidence likewise became the guardian of the accomplished Miss Mary C——h, whose father fell a victim to the resentment of a very near relative of his lordship. This young lady's charms soon awakened an ardent passion in his breast, but she refused his love and married a Mr. Masters, a circumstance which has had a marked influence upon Lord B.'s life and writings. It is this lady that he describes in his exquisite poem called “The Dream;” to her also he addressed the “Lines on seeing the Child of ———,” and the following beautiful piece, printed in his “Hours of Idleness:”

Oh! had my fate been joined with thine,
As once this pledge appear'd a token,
These follies had not then been mine,
For then my peace had not been broken.

To thee, these early faults I owe,
To thee, the wise and old's reproving;
They know my sins, but do not know
'Twas thine to break the bonds of loving.

For once, my soul, like thine, was pure,
And all its rising fires could smother;
But now thy vows no more endure,
Bestow'd by thee upon another.

Perhaps his peace I could destroy,
And spoil the blisses that await him;
Yet, let my rival smile in joy,
For thy dear sake, I cannot hate him.

Ah! since thy angel form is gone,
My heart no more can rest with any;
But what it thought in thee alone,
Attempts, alas! to find in many.

Then, fare thee well, deceitful maid,
'Twere vain and fruitless to regret thee;
Nor Hope nor Memory yield their aid,
But Pride may teach me to forget thee.

Yet all this giddy waste of years,
This tiresome round of palling pleasures,
These varied loves, these matron's fears,
These thoughtless strains to Passion's measures,

Had'st thou been mine, had all been hush'd;
This cheek, now pale from early riot,
With Passion's hectic ne'er had flush'd,
But bloom'd in calm domestic quiet.

Yes, once the rural scene was sweet,
For nature seem'd to smile before thee;
And once my breast abhor'd deceit,
For then it beat but to adore thee.

But now I seek for other joys;
To think, would drive my soul to madness;
In thoughtless throngs, and empty noise,
I conquer half my bosom's sadness.

Yet, ev'n in these, a thought will steal,
In spite of ev'ry vain endeavour;
And fiends might pity what I feel,
To know, that thou art lost for ever!

A writer in "Gold's London Magazine," No. 2, says, "Notwith-

standing the immortality which pervades many of Lord Byron's productions, he is sometimes touched with qualms of conscience, and recollections of purer and happier hours; and we know, from the authority of the late Dr. Strachey, Archdeacon of Suffolk, that he has occasionally consulted a clergyman on the subject of Religion."

COWPER — The following lines, from the pen of this writer, are little known:—

INSCRIPTION FOR A STONE, erected at the sowing of a Grove of Oaks, at CHILLINGTON, in STAFFORDSHIRE, the Seat of T. GIFFARD, Esq. 1790.

Other stones the era tell
When some feeble mortal fell;
I stand here to date the birth
Of these hardy sons of Earth.

Which shall longest brave the sky,
Storm, and frost,—these oaks, or I?—
Pass an age or two away,
I must moulder and decay;
But the years that crumble me,
Shall invigorate the tree,
Spread its branch, dilate its size,
Lift its summit to the skies.

Cherish honour, virtue, truth!
So shalt thou prolong thy youth.
Wanting these, however fast
Man be fix'd, and form'd to last,
He is lifeless even now,
Stone at heart, and cannot grow!

TRANS-ATLANTIC VARIETIES,

OR,

SELECTIONS FROM AMERICAN JOURNALS.

[Resumed from p. 344.]

SEA-SERPENT.—In the "New-York Gazette" and "Spectator," of July 17, and August 1, 1823, we meet with the following testimony of the existence of this much-talked of monster:—

"I, Francis Johnson, Junior, testify, that in going into the harbor from Nahant, July 12, 1823, at about 9 A. M. I saw standing into Lynn harbor, something in the water resembling a row of porpoises. I

then supposed it to be such, and forbore to notice it. About two hours afterwards, I heard a noise in the water, and saw, about four rods distant, something resembling the head of a fish or serpent, elevated about two feet above the surface, followed by seven or eight bunches, the first about six feet from the head, all about six feet apart, and raised about six inches above the water. It stood eastwardly at the rate of five miles an hour, with an undulating motion, like that of a caterpillar. Its color was dark, like that of a shark or porpoise. I pursued it about a mile, being in a small fishing boat, and had a full view of it for about 30 minutes, the water being smooth, and the sky clear; and then lost sight of it, supposing it to dive beneath the surface. I believe it to be what I took for a row of porpoises two hours before. I am about twenty years of age, was born and have always lived at Nahant, have been constantly employed in fishing, have seen every species of fish accustomed to visit our coast, but never saw any thing resembling this. I have heretofore constantly doubted the existence of the Sea Serpent, but now firmly believe what I saw to be the animal hitherto described as such.

(Signed) FRANCIS JOHNSON, Jr.
Nahant, July 12, 1823.

We hereby certify that the above statement was given in our presence, and from our knowledge of the character of Mr. Johnson, we have no doubt of his veracity.—(Signed)

H. A. S. DEARBORN.
NATH. AMORY.
SIDNEY BARTLETT.
THOS. WHETMORE.
RICH. D. HARRIS.
RUSSELL JARVIS.

I certify that Francis Johnson, Jr. made the same report to me, previous to his landing at Nahant.

J. S. DORR.

"Nahant, July 12, 1823."

"The Sea-Serpent was in Long-Island Sound on Wednesday last. A New-Bedford paper says—"we are informed that Captain Wyer, of the sloop Rose, from New-York, for

Nantucket, in passing through the Race, had a full view of him, and judged him to be about 80 feet in length."

HANDSOME STRAWBERRIES.—Yesterday we received from Mr. Frederick Lockwood, at Stamford, Connecticut, a large and beautiful bunch of strawberries, two of which measured FIVE INCHES in circumference. They were exhibited most of the day at the office of the Gazette, and excited the admiration of hundreds.—("New-York Gazette, June 28th, 1823.")

Interesting Varieties.

THE DIAMOND WORKS AT MANDANGO.

(FROM MAWE'S 'TRAVELS IN BRAZIL.')

THE principal of the diamond works is at a place called Mandango, on the river Jigitonhonha, in the district of Serra de Frio. Formerly the produce was mostly sent to Holland, where the stones were cut and set; but of late they have found their way to the London market.

The cascalhao which contains the diamond, is nearly of the same composition as that in which the gold is found,* but is generally met with under the beds of rivers. Caissons are constructed, and chain-pumps, worked by a water-wheel, made use of to draw off the water, in order to facilitate the digging for the cascalhao, which is brought together in a large heap; over which a shade is built. Here it is washed in long troughs through which a stream of water is made to pass.

On the heap of cascalhao, at equal distances, are placed three high chairs

* In no part of Brazil does gold appear to have been discovered in veins. For the most part of it is found in a stratum composed of roundish pebbles and gravel, bound together by oxide of iron, and forming a mass not unlike that which is called pudding-stone; and known to the natives by the name of cascalhao.

(without backs) for the officers or overseers. And after they are seated, the negroes enter the troughs, each provided with a rake of a peculiar form and short handle, with which he rakes in the trough about fifty or eighty pounds weight of cascalhao. The water being then let upon it, the cascalhao is spread abroad and continually raked up to the head of the trough so as to be kept in constant motion. This operation is performed for the space of a quarter of an hour; the water then begins to run clearer. Having washed the earthy particles away, the gravel-like matter is raked up to the end of the trough; after the current flows away quite clear, the largest stones are thrown out, and afterwards those of inferior size; then the whole is examined with great care for diamonds. When a negro finds one, he immediately stands upright, and claps his hands; then extends them, holding the gem between his fore-finger and thumb; an overseer receives it from him, and deposits it in a gemalla or bowl, suspended from the centre of the structure half full of water. In this vessel all the diamonds found in the course of the day are placed, and at the close of work are taken out and delivered to the principal officer, who, after they have been weighed, registers the particulars in a book kept for that purpose.

When a negro is so fortunate as to find a diamond of the weight of an octavo ($17\frac{1}{2}$ carats) much ceremony takes place; he is crowned with a wreath of flowers, and carried in procession to the administrator, who gives him his freedom by paying his owner for it. He also receives a present of new clothes, and is permitted to work on his own account. When a stone of eight or ten carats is found, the negro receives two new shirts, a complete new suit, with a hat, and a handsome knife. For smaller stones of trivial amount proportionate premiums are given. During the author's stay at Trejuco a stone of $16\frac{1}{2}$ carats was found; it was pleasing to see the anxious desire manifested by the officers that it might prove heavy enough to entitle the poor negro to his free-

dom, and when on being delivered and weighed, it proved only a carat short of the requisite weight, all seemed to sympathize in his disappointment.

JOHN AND SUKEY,

A PATHETIC BALLAD.

THE gas burn'd bright, and its tremulous rays,
They twinkled across the way,
And all in the mud and the drizzling rain,
There walked a lady so gay.

Now this lady's feet bore pattens two,
And her pattens went clickity clack;
And the lady's bonnet was on her head,
And her cloak it was on her back.

Full briskly she trotted adown the street,
And adown the street she walk'd;
But when she came to the wine vaults door,
Why in at the door she stalk'd.

But the lady she call'd not for a dram,
She wasn't a tippling she;
She came that night thro' the wind and the rain,
Her only true lover to see.

And she looked around for her true love John,
But her true love was not near,
For alas! alas! it was nine o'clock,
And he was gone out with the beer.

Then out at the door she went again,
And she turn'd up her nose at the sots;
And she walk'd tip-toe across the street,
Where her true love was crying 'pots!'

So she cried aloud, "Oh! you love me not,
I know it, you naughty man;
My love you scorn'd for the fat old cook,
Who gave you nice sops in the pan."

But he quick replied, "My charming dear,
I prythee, love, listen to me,
For in truth I have got but one true love,
And Sukey, dear, you are she.

For oh! the cook, with sops in the pan,
My constancy tried to prove;
But ah! when I gobbled the dainty bits,
I thought on my only love."

Then she gave him a kiss, and they
made it up,
While her tongue went clickity clack;
And when they had got to the end of the
street,
They turn'd them, and then—they
went back.

ENGLISH MANNERS.

THE strange notions entertained of our manners and customs by many foreigners may be seen by the curious paragraphs on such topics which occasionally appear in the Continental Journals, for a specimen of which we subjoin:—

1.—**ENGLISH LIBERTY.**—The following paragraph was printed in 1819 in the "Hamburgh Correspondenten." We have no doubt it was previously believed, by at least one half of those for whose edification it was intended. Among the many singular qualities which are supposed to distinguish us by untravelled and unreflecting foreigners (a large body), that of sending ourselves, for slight causes, into the other world by the aid of a halter, a pistol, or a razor, is devoutly credited:—

"Two houses opposite each other, at a small lane in London, being in a very decayed state, they were secured by a post reaching across the lane: this was considered by disappointed reformers, &c. as a very retired and comfortable place to hang themselves, and almost every morning there were found two or three of these miserable subjects hanging; till at last it became a nuisance, and the police being very attentive, placed a constable on the spot to prevent such amusements. Scarcely had the guardian taken his station, when a gentleman, with a string in his hand, appeared, and was deliberately going to dispatch himself out of this world of trouble; but being told by the constable that he must look for another place, as hanging was prohibited there, 'G—d d—n,' he exclaimed, 'what is become of our liberty.'

2.—**AN ENGLISH SUNDAY.**—The aspect which an English Sunday presents to a foreigner, is described in

the following extract from the letter of a French gentleman, resident in London:—"Nothing can be conceived more tiresome and melancholy than an English Sunday, whether in London or in the country. The theatres are all closed; the taverns are only opened at certain hours, and all gaming, dancing, and music are strictly prohibited. The tolls established at the turnpikes are increased, and a large portion of the population spend the day in traversing the Parks, or in strolling to gardens in the suburbs, where every man drinks his tea or beer, without speaking to his neighbour. It is the finest sight in the world to see men, women, and children, looking mournfully at each other, as they walk along and yawn; or else seated, with their arms across, at their windows (which are kept shut in all seasons of the year) counting the passengers as they pass."

3.—**ENGLISH GAMING.**—The following **AUTHENTIC** anecdote, was given by the editor of a Parisian paper to illustrate the passion for gaming prevalent amongst us:—

"A volume might be filled with the extravagant bets which are laid and taken in England in the course of one year. There is a taste, a fury, a rage for it; and the most amusing thing of all is the religious respect with which those who are not concerned in the bet, interdict whatever might prevent it from being carried through.

(For the Anecdote which should have followed here see page 367.)

4.—**TRUE POLITENESS.**—Some Frenchmen style us a nation of barbarians, while others carry their complaisance so far, as to say, that the English are the politest people on earth! and they give, as a proof, the following anecdote:—In one of those cold and misty days, which make an inhabitant of this country wish himself in the warmest part of Africa, two Frenchmen, and an English sailor, were the outside passengers on a stage coach, from Dover to London. One of the foreigners, and the Englishman, had good warm great coats upon them; but the other, who appeared to be suffering from the effects of a

severe sea sickness, during his passage from Calais, was without this best friend to outside passengers. His fellow-passenger, the Frenchman, compassionated his situation; and, with many professions of politeness, offered the use of his great coat; observing, that it was so warm and agreeable, that he could not but find it a valuable addition. The poor shivering fellow could not, however, be prevailed on to deprive the other of a piece of clothing, of which he spoke so highly; and without which he had plainly intimated he should be very uncomfortable. The English sailor, who saw that one party refused, from **POLITENESS**, that which he would willingly have received, while the other offered what he desired to retain, threw off his great coat, with—"d—n this here lumbering tackle, I am so hot in it, I can't breathe—here, Mounseer parlez vous, do you take it."

The Wit's Nunchion.

THE LAWYER AND BLACKSMITH.—A shrewd son of Vulcan applied to an eccentric attorney, for his advice respecting some legal transactions in which he was then engaged. The attorney, with that promptitude which is generally excited by a prospect of gain, gave the desired information, and then, as the blacksmith was a neighbour of his, and had formerly been a domestic in his family, took the liberty to request his assistance in picking a lock of which he had lost the key. The blacksmith readily picked the lock, and shewed the attorney, by his desire, how he might do it in future on a similar occasion. By some unaccountable association of ideas, the picking of the lock brought up to view in the attorney's mind his want of a wife. He told his neighbour, that during a long course of celibacy, he found it very uncomfortable living alone, and that if he could find a woman like his sister Betty (an odd old maid, vexed that her charms should bloom and wither

untasted and unattempted), he would even venture upon wedlock. He added, that he should be obliged to him if he would look out, and endeavour to find a woman with the properties of the before-named Betty, and give information of his search. The blacksmith promised he would, and then departed. A few months after, this limb of the law exhibited an account of 12s. against the blacksmith for his advice, and requested payment—it was refused—and the delinquent summoned soon after to appear before a justice, to answer to the suit of the attorney. The blacksmith appeared, and exhibited the following account, which had been previously filed against the lawyer:—

Mr. ——— to Mr. ———. Dr.	
To picking a lock for him ..	£0 3 0
To shewing him how to pick one ..	0 3 0
To horse hire, time, and trouble, in a fruitless attempt to find a woman like his sister Betty ..	0 6 0
	£0 12 0

The attorney abashed, confounded, and mortified, at this procedure, which exposed him to satire and ridicule, and the defendant threatening that he would carry the matter before the Court of Common Pleas, was glad to discontinue the action, give up the debt, and pay the cost of suit himself.

SCOTLAND.—The old Earl of Derby, who lived in the reigns of James and Charles I. wore such plain apparel that he could not be distinguished by his garb from the best sort of yeomen; and would say, that gaudy clothes were only fit for fools and wanton women; for wise men and modest women despised them, and took more care to adorn and furnish the inside than the outside. Coming to Court in a plain riding-coat; he was denied admittance into the Privy Chamber by a finical Scot, saying, "Gaffer, this is no place for you; the king has no occasion for a ploughman; none come here but men of

quality and gentlemen in rich habits." To which the Earl answered, he had such clothes as he used to wear always, and if the Scots would do so too, they would make but a mean figure in the English Court, in their Scotch plaids and blue bonnets.—The king, hearing a dispute at the chamber door, came out to ask what occasioned it, to whom the earl said, "Nothing, my liege, but your countrymen having left their manners and their rags behind them in Scotland, neither know themselves nor their betters." The king being angry at the affront offered to so great a man, said, "My good Lord Derby, I am sorry for the abuse given you by my servant, and to make your lordship satisfaction, I will command him to be hanged up by the neck, if your lordship desire it." The earl replied, "That is too light a punishment to repair my honour, and I expect his punishment should be more exemplary." "Name it, my lord," said the king, "and it shall be done." "Why then," said the earl, "I request your majesty will send him home again!"

A QUALIFIED DOG.—A respectable freeholder, in the vicinity of Wellington, whose greyhounds had coursed and killed a hare, received a letter, of which the following is a literal copy, printed from the original. The writer of the letter insisted that "HIS QUALIFIDE dog had killed the AIR;" adding

"I deemand the Air that my dog Kiled; and I take it no nerberin thing of you for taking the Liberty of Kiping, it; if you think you Are Justifiable in taking Air from Aqualifide Dog, then we see about it.—Your Ancer or the Air; I remain, your,

"W. I**."

"To Mr. Wm. Evans."

SIMPLICITY.—Amongst the DELIRAMENTA of the learned, which have amused mankind, the following instance merits a conspicuous rank:—

Some years ago there were several large elm trees in the College-garden, behind the Ecclesiastical Court, Doctor's Commons, in which a number of rooks had taken up their abode, forming, in appearance a sort of convocation of aerial ecclesiastics. A young gentleman who lodged in an attic, and was their close neighbour, frequently entertained himself with thinning this covey of black game, by means of a cross-bow. On the opposite side lived a curious old civilian, who, observing from his study that the rooks often dropt senseless from their perch, no sign being made to his vision to account for the phenomenon, set his wits to work to consider the cause. It was probably during a profitless time of peace, and the Doctor, having plenty of leisure, weighed the matter over and over, till he was at length fully satisfied that he had made a great ornithological discovery. He actually wrote a treatise, stating circumstantially what he himself had seen, and in conclusion giving it as the settled conviction of his mind, that rooks were subject to epilepsy!

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

THE delay of a week which has taken place in the appearance of this number, was quite unforeseen and unavoidable, but we trust our readers will find that it has not caused any relaxation in our efforts to excel, and we can assure them that the interval of leisure has enabled us more effectually to mature our plans of novelty and improvement for our second volume, which will commence with number 53.

CYMON's packet shall be made good use of. INGENIO is very kind, and merits our gratitude. Why has J. C. neglected to perform his promise? We have made some extracts from the MS. of Panglos, which lies for him at Mr. Fairburn's, with his REAL address. We shall adopt the suggestion of MOMUS.

ERRATA. P. 368, col. 1, line 2, read "to their party;" line 4 from the bottom, read "in correcting."

RECEIVED. Tim—L. P.—Reaper—Sam—and C. J.

THE NIC-NAO;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 48.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1823.

VOL. L

"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



HISTORY OF THE

ENGLISH STAGE.

SECTION 15. The prosperous state of Drury Lane under the management of Wilks, Dogget, and Cibber, has already been noticed in Sec. 13. Their success for a series of years was very great, and doubtless well-deserved. To the practical knowledge of stage affairs, the fruit of long experience, which each of them possessed, was added the happy talent for comic writing enjoyed by Cibber. In spite of the paltry malevolence and pitiful attacks of Pope, some of Colley's compositions are still occasionally performed, and will perhaps retain their popularity as long as the poems of him who derided them. Various causes, however, conspired to bring about a dissolution of this happy combination of talent; the first of these was the introduction of Booth to a share in the management, at the period when he had acquired high reputation by his performance of Cato. Dogget, strongly opposed his admission, but finding his efforts fruitless, he sold his share in disgust, never performing but once afterwards, which was for the benefit of Mrs Porter. In September, 1731, Wilks died, and Cibber disliking the

new proprietors who then became introduced to the theatre, and finding the infirmities of age creeping upon him, shortly after gave up his interest in the house to his son Theophilus.

From this time the fortunes of Drury began to decline; manager succeeded to manager, with invariable ill success. The usual revolts and dissensions took place, and all was in confusion; when on the 19th of October, 1741, an event took place which led the way to a total change in the aspect of theatrical affairs, and forms a most memorable era in the history of the English Stage. This was the appearance of Garrick at Goodman's Fields, in the character of Richard the Third. The sensation excited by his unequalled acting has been so repeatedly described, and we have so recently adverted to the subject (vide page 362), that it is quite needless to relate what every one is acquainted with; suffice it to say, that he engrossed the whole attention of the theatrical world, and gave such uneasiness to the Drury Lane and Covent Garden managers, that they threatened to commence prosecutions

both against himself and Gifford for performing at Goodman's Fields Theatre, contrary to law. By this means they contrived to intimidate Gifford, who made the best terms he could with Fleetwood, the Drury Lane manager, and Garrick entered into an engagement to perform at his theatre for the annual salary of 500*l*. We shall not follow Garrick through all the various changes of situation which succeeded his joining with Fleetwood, as the reader may find them excellently detailed in the Memoirs of his Life, by T. Davies, one of the most pleasing pieces of biography existing; it will be sufficient to remark, that he speedily arrived at the summit of fame, and by his prudent conduct acquired a pretty considerable income. An opportunity shortly offered itself for employing this to great advantage; the affairs of Drury Lane, by the misconduct of the managers, had become so embarrassed, that the whole property of the theatre was offered for sale at a very low price, and was purchased by Garrick jointly with Mr. Lacey. Every thing being arranged, the house was opened in 1747, with a noble prologue, written by Johnson, and spoken by Garrick. From this period till the year 1776, when Garrick quitted all connection with the theatre, dramatic amusements were carried on at this house with such taste, spirit, and success, as we must despair ever to see again.

In the meanwhile Covent Garden, under the management of Rich, was conducted in a very different style. For what is called the regular drama, Rich felt and avowed the most supreme contempt; and this he carried so far, that he was sometimes heard to say, after looking through the hole in the green curtain, and seeing a crowded house assembled to witness the performance of a Tragedy—"What, you are there, you fools, are you? Well, much good may it do you!" His sole delight consisted in the production of pantomimes, splendid spectacles, &c. for which he possessed considerable abilities, and his spirit seems to have pervaded all the

managers of that theatre who have succeeded him. In "scenery, dresses, and decorations," old Drury has generally been half a century behind her rival. The attraction of Rich's raree-shows was sometimes such as to induce Garrick to attempt a competition, but here he invariably failed, and at length had the good sense to abandon a contest in which he was certain of being worsted. The names of all the individuals who have been proprietors and managers of this house since the death of Rich, we do not think proper to enumerate, because, to confess the truth, we are not acquainted with one half of them. We merely know, that for the last half century the Harrises held the principal part of the property of the theatre, and that in 1822, Mr. H. Harris transferred his interest in it, for a term of eight years, to Messrs. C. Kemble, Willett, and Forbes, the present managers. An account of the various alterations of the old house, and the erection of the new one, will be given hereafter.

Whatever might be the excellence of the acting in Garrick's time, it is certain that the Stage had by no means attained to that propriety of costume which we now observe upon it. Romans and Turks were attired in English dresses; Cato strutted about with a long curly wig on his head; and Hamlet with a cocked hat of the last London cut. Many of these absurdities, however, were removed before Garrick quitted the theatre. It may be amusing to read the remarks of a contemporary of Quin, upon his manner of dressing and acting the young fiery Chamont:

"It will perhaps scarcely be credited, yet is most solemnly true, that we have seen Mr. Quin, when at least 60 years old, and of such corpulence as to weigh 20 stone, roll on for the young Chamont in the Orphan, in a suit of clothes heavy enough for Othello; a pair of stiff-topped white gloves, then only worn by attendants on a funeral, an old fashioned major-wig, and black stockings: yet, odd as this external appearance may seem, his performance was not one jot less

so; and, without exaggeration, we may assert, that there never was any thing so like burlesque as this veteran's dronish apology for the juvenile soldier!"*

To illustrate the above remarks, we have given exact copies of two prints, which sufficiently shew how little attention was paid to correctness of costume. The figure on the right represents Garrick, in *Macbeth*; it was published in "*Bell's Shakespeare*," September 25, 1775, and is inscribed, "T. Parkinson, *ad vivum del.*" The other figure is Mrs. Abington, as *Estifania*, and is copied from a print in Bell's "*British Theatre*." A periodical work, illustrative of the present improved Stage-Costume, has just been commenced by Mr. Planché, the dramatist.—(Resumed at page 392.)

ROYAL REVELS.

MUCH attention has of late been drawn by various publications and reprints, to the Masques and Shows which were frequently exhibited at the Court of England during the 16th and 17th centuries; but these entertainments were not invariably distinguished by elegance or refinement:—Of the gross clumsiness of James the First's revels, an idea may be formed from the following singular account of one, which was given by that prince in honor of Christian IV. of Denmark.

"One day a great feast was held, and, after dinner, the representation of Solomon his Temple, and the coming of the Queen of Sheba, was made, or (as I may better say) was meant to have been made, before their Majesties, by devise of the Earl of Salisbury and others. But, alas! as all earthly things do fail to poor mortals in enjoyment, so did prove our presentment hereof. The ladie who did play the Queen's part, did carry most precious gifts to both their Majesties; but, forgetting the steps arising to the canopy, overset her caskets into his Danish Majesties' lap, and fell at his

feet, though I rather think it was in his face. Much were the hurry and confusion; clothes and napkins were at hand to make all clean. His majesty then got up and would dance with the Queen of Sheba, but he fell down and humbled himself before her, and was carried to an inner chamber, and laid upon a bed of state, which was not a little defiled with the presents of the Queen, which had been bestowed on his garments; such as wine, cream, jelly, beverage, cakes, spices, and other good matters.

"The entertainment and show went forward, and most of the presenters went backward, or fell down; wine did so occupy their upper chambers. Now did appear, in rich dresses, HOPE, FAITH, and CHARITY: Hope did essay to speak, but wine rendered her endeavours so feeble, that she withdrew, and hoped the King would excuse her brevity. Faith was then left all alone, for I am certain she was not joined with Good Works, and left the court in a staggering condition. Charity came to the King's feet, and seemed to cover the multitude of sins her sisters had committed; in some sort she made obeisance, and brought gifts, but said she would return home again, as there was no gift which heaven had not already given his Majesty. She then returned to Hope and Faith, who were both sick and spewing in the lower hall. Next came Victory, in bright armour, and presented a rich sword to the King, who did not accept it, but put it by with his hand; and by a strange medley of versification, did endeavour to make suit to the King. But Victory did not triumph long; for, after much lamentable utterance, she was led away like a silly captive, and put to sleep on the outer steps of the antichamber. Now did Peace make entry, and strove to get foremost to the ring; but I grieve to tell how great wrath she did discover unto those of her attendants, and, much contrary unto her semblance, most rudely made war with her olive branch, and laid on the pates of those who did oppose her coming. I have much marvelled at these strange pageant-

* Dramatic Censor, vol. 2, page 58.

ries; and they do bring to my remembrance what past of this sort in our Queen Elizabeth's days, of which I was sometimes a humble presenter and assistant but I ne'er did see such lack of good order, discretion, and sobriety, as I have now done."

Nugæ Antiquæ, vol. 1, p. 349.

THE BREECHES.

"And behold there was a pair of Leather Breeches."

HUNTINGTON'S BANK OF FAITH.

MR. EDITOR,—It is not with an intention of commenting on any of the marvellous stories recorded in the above mentioned work, which none but the fanatic proselytes of the late ranting coal-heaver, who wrote it, could possibly give credit to, that I have borrowed from it a motto to this letter—No, sir, it is intended merely to pave the way towards the relation of an adventure, which took place in a certain borough, about sixty miles distance from the metropolis; wherein not a "pair of leather," but a "pair of nankeen breeches," bore a conspicuous figure. And if you, sir, will condescend to allow it a small space in one of your entertaining columns, in a few words "I will the round unvarnished Tale deliver."

A certain gentleman, fond of variety, like too many, alas! in this profligate age, leaving his own blooming mate at home, to toss from side to side, and all alone to press a sleepless pillow; stole, mid the dark, to pass the night with the wife of a tailor, whose husband had gone from home for a few days. Happening to fall asleep in the arms of his dulcinea, they were unseasonably awakened by a loud rapping at the house-door. Instantly recollecting the jeopardy of his situation, the alarmed interloper took refuge under the bed; the female knowing it to be her husband's rap, who had returned one night sooner than he was expected, went and let him in. Blest with the quick invention of her sex in cases of emergency, just as he had stript off his clothes,

and was stepping into bed, she affected to be taken suddenly with an excruciating cholic, and begged him for God's sake to go and fetch some gin. He, compassionating her pretended agony, slipt on his clothes again, and went to a neighbouring public house for the anodyne potion. Putting his hand into his breeches pocket for the money to pay for it, he pulled out what he supposed to be a shilling, and put it into the landlord's hands; who, looking at the piece, said he could not give change for a guinea. "A guinea!" exclaimed the astonished tailor—"then I am certain it is none of mine;" feeling again about his pocket, to his farther amazement, he pulled out a watch, saying, "What does all this mean? I never was master of a watch in my life; and (looking down) d—n it these are not my breeches."

How the gentleman escaped; whether he put on the tailor's breeches, or went home sans-culotte fashion; and how the frail one made her peace with the cornueed husband, are circumstances that have not yet transpired; but the affair itself, deviating from the tameness of common occurrences, and bordering a little on the marvellous, I thought in the present dearth of news, some of your readers might be amused with the relation of it.

I am, sir,

Yours very respectfully,

P.

SMOLLETT'S TOMB.

On the banks of the Arno, between Leghorn and Pisa, in the most romantic spot that even the vivid imagination of an Italian could select, rises the tomb of our countryman Smollett, the author of "Roderick Random," &c. It is of a plain octagonal form, about thirty feet in height, and six feet in diameter at the base, which forms an apartment, to which there are three doors. The English who visit it from the port of Leghorn, have erected a plain marble table, surrounded with stone seats within; and scarcely a vessel arrives, but the officers and crew pay a visit to Smol-

lett's tomb. It is worthy of remark, that the tomb is covered with laurel, so that hardly one stone can be seen, and it is even bound up to clear the entrance at the doors. The laurel grows wild in all parts of Tuscany, and the homage of friends has planted many a slip on the tomb of departed genius. Four marble slabs are placed inside, with inscriptions in the Italian, Latin, Greek, and English languages. The Italian runs thus :

Stranger ! respect the name of **TOBIAS SMOLLETT**,
An Englishman,
A man of letters, and playful genius.
He died contented in Tuscany ;
His soul requires your prayers. J.B.

LATIN.

He knew every thing—he loved every one.
Familiar with past and present ages,
His works merit a place by the side of Boccaccio.
Pray for his soul. S.

GREEK.

Here Smollett rests, a citizen of the world,
A Xenophon and an Hippocrates,
A Terence and a Boccaccio.
If he had a native country, it was this ;
For here he chose to die :
I was his Friend.
J. PALLIONIETTA.

ENGLISH.

“ Patria cara, cario libertas.”

The great Historian of his day,
Who rivalled all but Hume below,
Thou tread'st upon his lowly clay ;
Then let thy tear of rapture flow.
The FIRST of Novelists he shone.
The FIRST of Moralists was he,
Who nature's pencil waved alone,
And painted man as he should be.
Dumbarton's vale in life's gay prime
Cherish'd this blossom of the north,
Italia's sweet and favoured clime
Enshrines in death the man of worth.
J. H. B.

A poet of Italy has said pleasantly, that he cared not where his bones were laid, so that they were not molested by having bad verses inscribed

on the spot where they lay. If poor Smollett had the same feelings, how dreadfully unquiet must he lie under the weight of such execrable epitaphs as are above quoted. The first three are translations of the Italian, Latin, and Greek inscriptions ; the fourth is original English, and luckily defies translation into any other tongue. Besides the wretched versification, the two first contain what is frequently very necessary in an epitaph, but what certainly cannot recommend it to those who know the subject of it : They contain each an untruth : Smollett did NOT die CONTENTED in Tuscany, but with the utmost regret. Smollett did NOT LOVE EVERY BODY, but was almost as great a hater of his fellow-creatures as Swift himself.—The Greek appears to have been written by no very “ learned Theban” or Boeotian, who had probably learnt logic from an Irish priest, if we may judge by his reasoning. The fourth has the merit, and that alone, of a successful attempt to crowd into twelve lines as much nonsense and bad verse as the space would admit.

Interesting Varieties.

PRECIOUS NONSENSE.

(SELECTED FROM DIFFERENT
AUTHORS.)

“ Had the calf of the leg been providentially and prominently placed before, instead of being preposterously and prejudicially placed behind, it had been evidently better, forasmuch as the human shin bone could not so easily have been broken.”—Vide Dr. Moreton's “ Beauty of the Human Structure,” Glasgow edit. 4to. p. 62.

“ The city of London is the largest city in the world, and the people of London the wisest.”—Wilson's “ Candid Traveller,” p. 42.

“ One English Man of War will beat a Dutch Fleet.”—Nichol's “ Naval Expedit.” ch. 4, § 8.

“ One Englishman can beat five Frenchmen.”—Williamson's “ Serious Positions,” p. 42.

"Though I have examined what all other authors have written on this affair with great impartiality, yet I cannot conceive that any of them have the least merit, nor do I find one man that has treated this subject sensibly but myself."—Smithson's "Amiability of Candour and Diffidence," p. 48.

A SPECIMEN OF BOUNCING.

A recruiting serjeant at a country fair procured a great number of men by telling them, that he did not want them to learn their exercise, or to do any of the drudgery of a common soldier. "We are going," says he, "to knock down the Spaniards by dozens, and I want a few clever active young fellows to kneel down and take the dollars out of the Dons' pockets as they lie on the ground!" **THALIA.**

ANTIQUITY OF A PROVERB.

The antiquity of certain proverbs is among the most striking singularities in the annals of the human kind. Abdalmalek, one of the Caliphs of the race of Omniades, was surnamed, by way of sarcasm, Roseb al Hegiaias, that is to say, "the skinner of a flint;" and to this day we call an avaricious man a **SKIN FLINT**.

THALIA.

HOW TO RULE A HUSBAND.

If you would hold your husband long,
You first must learn to hold your tongue.

THE NORTH POLE.

A dreaming philosopher, of the name of John Cleves Symmes, transmitted, a few years since, from Cincinnati, on the Ohio, some new geological views, worthy of the attention of those who lend their FAITH to the chimeras of gravitating, attractive, and projectile, forces. He maintains that the Polar basin is not filled with unfrozen water, but consists of a great gulph or opening into another concentric sphere or world, which likewise has its polar gulphs, leading to other spheres, one within another, five or six deep. He offered to make

a journey in person, to verify his theory, and explore the concentric spheres which fill up the vast interior of the earth. As much faith as enables a man to believe in many theories taught in Europe, will produce abundance of votaries to Mr. Symmes's truly sublime system, particularly as he demonstrated his doctrines by geometrical diagrams. The following is a copy of his public challenge:—

"Light developes light ad infinitum.

"St. Louis [Missouri Territory],
North America, April 10,
A. D. 1818.

"**TO ALL THE WORLD.**—I declare the earth to be hollow and habitable within; containing a number of concentric spheres, one within the other, and that their poles are open twelve or sixteen degrees. I pledge my life in support of this truth, and am ready to explore the concave, if the world will support and aid me in the undertaking.

"**JOHN CLEVES SYMMES,**
"Of Ohio, late Captain of Infantry.

"I ask one hundred brave companions, well equipped, to start from Siberia, in autumn, with reindeer and sledges, on the ice of the Frozen Sea; I engage we find a warm country and rich land, stocked with thrifty vegetables and animals, if not men, on reaching about sixty-nine miles northward of latitude 82; we will return in the succeeding spring.

"**J. C. S.**"

BALLAD.

BY MRS. CORNWELL BARON WILSON.

HE will return!—oh! never doubt thy
Lover;

With glowing bosom he'll return to
thee;

Soon as the cares of busy day are over,
Beneath thy lattice-grate, his form
thou'lt see!

The day was made for slavery and sorrow,

And 'tis in hours of silence and repose,
When weary wretches dream upon the
morrow,

That hearts like ours should meet, to
breathe their secret woes.

See!—now the beams of ruddy morning
 shining,
 Warn his reluctant feet from thee to
 part;
 But when in western skies yon orb's re-
 ceiving,
 Again he'll press thee to his bleeding
 heart!
 He will return!—oh! never doubt thy
 Lover,
 Soon as the golden stars of eve appear;
 When all the toils of busy day are over,
 Beneath thy lattice-grate his voice shall
 greet thy listening ear.

THE DEXTEROUS PICK-POCKET.

Two gentlemen walking in St. James's street, espied a fellow sauntering about, whom they knew to be a noted pickpocket. In order to afford themselves a little diversion, and to try the rogue's skill and expertness, one of them pulled his handkerchief a little way out of his pocket, taking care to secure it at the bottom, by means of a pin, so that it could not be taken away without detection. They then passed this light-fingered gentleman once or twice. At last, attracted by the BAIT, he made up to them, and coming up in close contract, excused himself for having pushed against them, and went on. The gentlemen then examined the pocket, and found the handkerchief just as they had placed it; this produced some merriment between them, and they laughed most heartily at the thought of having, as they conceived, been too MUCH for the skill and ingenuity of the pick-pocket. By and bye, however, one of the gentlemen had occasion for his pocket book, in which was his money, to pay for an article which he was purchasing at a shop—but, lo! to his extreme mortification—the pocket book was gone! The contents were bank notes amounting to 20 or 30 pounds.

The Wit's Nunchion.

TONY ASTON.—Of this itinerant comedian, numberless droll stories are

on record. The following is given by Chetwood, in his "History of the Stage:"—His finances, like those of kingdoms, were sometimes on the tide of flood, and as often at low ebb. In one, where his stream had left the channel dry, he called up his landlord, to whom there was something due, told him of his distress, and asserting that he was sent for to another place, requested he would lend him a small sum upon his wardrobe (which he shewed him in a large box), ten times the value of the debt owing, or the sum borrowed. The honest landlord, seeing a proper security, easily complied, gave him the sum he demanded, locked up the trunk, put the key in his pocket, and retired. But as no vessel can make a voyage without sails, and other proper materials, Joe had contrived a false bottom to this great box, by which means he took out the contents, and by degrees sent off his whole wardrobe, by his emissaries, unperceived; and that the difference of weight should not detect him, he filled up the void with cabbage-stalks, bricks, and stones.—Every thing having thus succeeded to his wish, he went Tony, but far wide of the place he had mentioned to mine host. A week was the stated time for redemption, which the landlord saw expire with infinite satisfaction; he then announced the contents of the trunk for sale, and opened it with great glee; but when he saw the fine lining, he was motionless. His first thought was how to revenge himself: he sent a bailiff, with proper directions, to the place Tony had mentioned, but if his anger had allowed him to reflect a little, he might well have imagined that Tony knew better than to have put him upon the right scent. Tony, however, the moment his finances were in order, repaired to Boniface, and honestly paid him.

CREATION.—A young quaker, from a distant county, came to London a few years ago, and being struck with the gay fashions of the times, commenced beau. Among other articles of dress, he ordered a blue satin

waistcoat, trimmed with silver, and in this he returned to his father, who, after staring at him, exclaimed, "How did'st thou get this trumpery waistcoat, for the vain adornment of thy outward person?"—"I created it," said the son. "Created it!" echoed the father. "Yea, verily," replied young Aminadab, "for I said, Let it be made, and it was made."

LOGIC.—The position of one of the ancient philosophers, that **HALF IS BETTER THAN THE WHOLE**, being once disputed, and said to be very obscure, a young Oxonian who was present asserted, that it was as clear as anything well could be, and that he himself was precisely of the same opinion. For instance, said he—

"The **WHOLE** of Celia's bed I don't require,
To **SHARE** it WITH HER's all that I desire."

ADVERTISEMENT EXTRAORDINARY.

—A German, who had lost his horse, published the following notice:—"Rund away, or vas strayed, mine large plack horse, about 14 or 15 hands 6 inches hie. He has got four plack legs, two pehind and two pefore; he is plack all over his pody, but he has got some vite spots pon his pack, where de skin vas rub off, but I gressed em, and de vite spots is all plack again. He trods and kanter, and sometimes he valks; and ven he valks, all his legs and feet goes on von after anoder. He has two ears pon his head, poth alike, but von is plackor dan toder. He has two eyes, von is put out, and toder is pon the side of his head; and when you go toder side, he vont see you. Ven he eats good deal, he has pig belly; he has long dail, dat hangs down pehind, but I cut it short toder day, and now tis not so long vat it vas. He is shoed all round, but his pehind shoes com'd off, and now he has got on shoes only pefore.

He holts up his head, and looks gaily; and ven he has ben frighten, he jumps about like evary ting in the world. He vill ride mit a saddle, or a chaise, or a kart; or he vill go by himself without nopody but a pag on his pack and a poy on it. He is not very old; and ven he valks, or runs, his head goes first, and his dail stays pehind; only ven he gets mad and turns round, den his tail comes first.—V however vill bring him pack shall pay five dollars reward; and if he bring pack de tief dat sdole him, he shall pay pe-side dwendy dollars, and ax no gues-dens."

AN actor, who was much in debt, being asked how he could sleep with such debts upon him, said, "The wonder is, how my creditors can sleep."

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A LIBERAL return will be made for the loan of the MSS. mentioned by C. S.—le. D. and G. S. W. are not forgotten, but we must solicit their patience; a contemplated increase in the size of our work, after the completion of the present volume, will ve trust render these unpleasant trespasses upon the forbearance of our readers, less frequently necessary in future. Clio expresses a hope that "T. J.—d, the present possessor of Mrs. Woolley's book (vide p.p. 327 and 344), will furnish us with some more extracts from that curious work." The American Papers came safely to hand; also Clio [7 and 8]. We should like to look over the articles in the Lancashire dialect, mentioned by C.—The reprint of No. 9, is ready for delivery.

ERRATA. P. 371, col. 2, line 1, read "immorality."—P. 372, col. 1, line 35, read "1823."—P. 374, col. 1, line 19, read "seriously believed."

The signature of Curiosus should have been appended to the "Ballad" at p. 373.

RECEIVED. Tubal—C. O.—Ille Ego.—Malton—J. P.—and "Remarks on Christmas Carols," without a signature.

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

NO. 49.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown us."—SHAKESPEARE.



MR. HAYES' HEAD EXHIBITED AT WESTMINSTER.

MURDER in any form is a crime most abhorrent to human nature, but the cold blooded deliberate assassination of a man by the woman who has sworn in the presence of God to love and honour him, excites our horror and indignation in a tenfold degree. In law the act is styled Petit Treason, and the woman guilty of it was formerly burned alive.

Few cases of the kind are marked by circumstances of greater atrocity than that we are about to describe. Catherine Hayes, the daughter of a labourer, was born at Birmingham, in 1690, and at the age of fifteen, upon a trifling dispute with her mother, she set off on foot to "seek her fortune"

in London. Being possessed of some personal attraction, she was picked up on the road by a recruiting officer, who carried her to his quarters in Worcestershire, where he kept her for some time, and then abandoned her. After this she procured a situation as servant to a Mr. Hayes, a farmer in the neighbourhood, whose son, a carpenter, became enamoured of and privately married her. For several years they led a very uncomfortable life together, through her violent and quarrelsome temper, till at length she persuaded him to quit the country, and commence business in London; here he opened a shop as a coal-merchant and corn-chandler, to which oc-

cupation he soon after added that of a pawn-broker, and having managed to procure a decent competence, quitted trade, and took lodgings at a private house in the neighbourhood of Oxford Street.

In the same house there lived a journeyman tailor named Billings, with whom Mrs. Hayes, who had long been tired of her husband, commenced an adulterous intercourse, which led her by degrees to the acme of wickedness; so true is the remark of the poet—

“Where whoredom reigns, there
murder follows fast
As falling leaves before the winter's
blast.”

The guilty pair soon became anxious to get rid of Hayes, whose suspicions of their intimacy having been excited, he kept close watch over them, and thus became an obstacle in the way of their meetings so frequently as they wished. Accordingly, having secured the assistance of one Wood, a country-fellow on a visit in the house, they took an opportunity when Hayes was laying on his bed, intoxicated, to split his skull with a hatchet; and then being at a loss what to do with the carcass, Mrs. Hayes proposed that they should first cut off the head, and throw it into the Thames, so that the body when found might not be recognised, which being agreed to, the wretched woman held a pail to receive the blood, while Wood decapitated it with a pocket knife. Wood and Billings then set off with the head in a pail towards Westminster, and coming to a wharf near the Horse-Ferry, they threw their burthen into the river, expecting that it would speedily be carried away by the tide, but in this they were deceived, for as it was low water, the head remained in the spot where it was thrown, and being found there next morning, the circumstance was reported to the magistrates, who caused immediate enquiries to be instituted respecting it. While Billings and Wood were going down stairs with the head, Mrs. Hayes artfully stood at the top, pretending to bid farewell to her husband, as if he was

setting out on a journey, in order to deceive the other lodgers, and when they returned, she let them in so softly, that no one heard them.

Their first thoughts next day were how to get rid of the body, and after much consultation they resolved to chop off the legs and arms, carry it away piecemeal after dark, and leave it in the fields. This was accordingly done; Billings and Wood taking the mangled limbs in a blanket, and depositing them in the Marylebone Fields, now called the Regent's Park, near to the spot where Sir Edmonbury Godfrey's body was discovered in the reign of Charles II. This done, they fancied all was safe; but their guilt was discovered in a manner as strange as unexpected.

The Magistrates of Westminster upon receiving information of the discovery of the head, had given directions for its being cleansed, and fixed on a pole in St. Margaret's churchyard, in order that it might be identified if possible; immense crowds of course flocked to the spot, and several people fancied that the features bore a close resemblance to those of Hayes, but upon his wife being questioned about it, she so plausibly accounted for her husband's absence, that they concluded they were mistaken, and thought no more of the matter. At length, the head beginning to putrify, it was ordered to be placed in spirits, and kept in the custody of Mr. Westbrook, a surgeon of Westminster.

Some time now elapsed without farther enquiry, and the affair was almost forgotten; but Mr. Hayes not making his appearance, the suspicions of his friends were again aroused, and were strengthened by the circumstance that to several of them who called on her at different times, Mrs. Hayes gave quite different accounts of her husband's place of residence, and the cause of his long absence. Two of them at length resolved to inspect the head more narrowly, and feeling convinced that it was Mr. Hayes's, they obtained a warrant for the apprehension of his wife, Wood, and Billings, with whom she had been observed to be remarkably intimate. Just at this

time, a gentleman taking a walk in Marylebone Fields, had his notice attracted by something lying in a ditch, which upon examination proved to be the mangled remains of Hayes's body. Soon after their apprehension, Wood made a voluntary confession of the whole affair, though he was told that he must not expect any favour to be shewn him on that score. He subsequently contracted a fever in the Condemned Hole, and died there before he could be brought to execution. Catherine Hayes and Billings were executed at Tyburn, about 1730, he being hanged, and she burned alive, a circumstance which in spite of the horror felt at her guilt, excited much animadversion.

This affair made a greater noise and excited more interest, than perhaps any succeeding murder has done, swelled as the black annals of crime have been by such deeds, though by few so atrocious as that near Watford, which at the present moment occupies the whole attention of the public.

To wind up so tragical a history with any thing comic, is somewhat out of keeping, but we cannot refrain from laying before our readers a ballad upon the subject, said to have been written by Dean Swift:—

In Tyburn-road a man there liv'd
A just and honest life,
And there he might have lived still,
If so had pleas'd his wife.

But she, to vicious ways inclin'd,
A life most wicked led,
With tailors and with tinkers too
She oft deall'd his bed.

Full twice a-day to church he went,
And so devout would be,
Sure never was a saint on earth,
If that no saint was he!

This vext his wife unto the heart,
She was of wrath so full,
That finding no hole in his coat,
She pick'd one in his scull.

But then her heart 'gan to relent,
And griev'd she was so sore,
That quarter to him for to give,
She cut him into four.

All in the dark and dead of night,
These quarters she convey'd,
And in a ditch at Marybone,
His marrow-bones she laid.

His head at Westminster she threw,
All in the Thames so wide;
Says she, my dear the wind sets fair,
And you may have the tide.

But heav'n, whose pow'r no limits know
On earth, or on the main,
Soon caus'd this head for to be thrown
Upon the land again.

This head being found, the justices
Their heads together laid;
And all agreed there must have been
Some body to this head.

But since no body could be found,
High mounted on a shelf,
They e'en set up the head to be
A witness for itself.

Next, that it no self-murder was,
The case itself explains,
For no man could cut off his head,
And throw it in the Thames.

Ere many days had gone and past,
The deed at length was known,
And Cath'rine she confess'd, at last,
The fact to be her own.

God prosper long our noble king,
Our lives and saleties all,
And grant that we may warning take
By Cath'rine Hayes's fall

SPANISH ETIQUETTE.

WE shall not trespass on our readers with the well known story of the king of Spain, who burnt himself to death before a huge fire, because the proper officer for removing his majesty to a safe distance from its fierceness happened to be out of the way, and etiquette would not allow of the interference of any one else, while dignity sternly forbade a self movement on the part of the sovereign. The following anecdote has a less tragical termination, but gives us an almost equally frightful idea of the tyranny of Form, and has besides a reference to tyranny of another kind, which, although not more rigorous—(how could it be so?)—fell upon victims more deserving of our sympathy, than

those whose tortures, like the pains occasioned by tight-lacing, were inflicted by themselves, in consequence of their mistaken awkward constraint for graceful appearance. The old government of Spain suggests to the mind a hideous image made up of starch and faggots,—presiding in sulkiness, laziness, ignorance, and cruelty. Thank God! other prospects now open for that country:—the shock has been a severe one, but it has put the vital fluid into vigorous circulation; it has substituted keen spirit and free action for bloated ignorance and abject slavery.—But to our anecdote:—Moro was a portrait painter of skill, and was much esteemed by that amateur of the Fine Arts and of executions, Philip the 2nd of Spain. It has been remarked of this prince, that he deserved well of the arts, and in company with them he found himself for once amongst his friends.—In his council chamber the defection of provinces galled his pride- and the dispersion of armadas thwarted his ambition. In his closet the injured Perez stung his conscience, and the unhappy Don Carlos haunted his imagination. But in the academy he saw himself in his most favorable light, and perhaps the only one which can reflect a lustre on his memory. Moro was not a Spaniard, and was not sufficiently impressed with the awful sanctity of majesty; he, therefore, rashly fancied that he might return the familiarities of the king. The following are the words of our authority:—"One day when he was at his work, and Philip looking on, Moro dipt his pencil in carmine, and with it smeared the hand of the king, who was resting his arm on his shoulder: the jest was rash, and the character to which it was applied, not to be played upon with impunity; the hand of the sovereign of Spain (which even the fair sex kneel down to salute), was never so treated since the foundation of the monarchy; the king surveyed it seriously awhile, and in that perilous moment of suspense the fate of Moro balanced on a hair! The courtiers, who were in awful attendance, revolted from the sight in hor-

ror and amazement. Caprice, or I would rather say pity, turned the scale, and Philip passed the silly action off with a smile of complacency: the painter, dropping on his knees, eagerly seized those of the king, and kissed his feet, in humble atonement for the offence, and all was well, or seemed so to be. But the person of the king was too sacred in the consideration of those times, and the act too daring to escape the notice of the Inquisition. These holy and enlightened fathers, maturely weighing all the circumstances of the case, learnedly concluded that Antonio Moro, being a foreigner, and a traveller, had either learnt the art of magic, or obtained in England some spell, or charm, where-with he had bewitched the king. If Moro had contended that he practised no other charms upon Philip, than those of his art, which over some minds has a kind of bewitching influence, such a plea would scarce have passed with his judges, whose hearts were far out of reach of such mechanical fascination. As it is hard to suppose how any man could daub the fingers of a king of Spain with carmine, unless by the correspondence and conspiracy of the devil, or some of his agents in witchcraft, no doubt the tragedy of poor TOR REGIANO would have been revived on this occasion, had not the same devil, in the shape of one of Philip's ministers, luckily snatched Antonio from his fate, whilst the tortures were preparing to force out the impious secrets of his black and diabolical art."

THE
STAFFORDSHIRE POTTERIES
FROM THE MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

[We give this article as a companion to that on the Staffordshire Collieries in our 46th number: it forms one of a series of Letters, addressed to a friend, descriptive of a tour through the midland counties, in the summer of 1823.]

QUITTING Litchfield, about the middle of July, we pursued our journey towards the northern extremity of

Staffordshire, through some of the most luxuriant scenery I ever beheld. I have been rather concise in my description of the ancient city we left behind; because I know that the theme would harmonize but indifferently with your reprobate democratical principles, and that dissertations upon its antiquity, the beauty of its cathedral, and the proverbial loyalty of its inhabitants, would be but frigidly perused by one who has little reverence for episcopacy, inclines strongly to the anti-monarchical principle, and deems all antiquarian researches mere foolery, when set in competition with enquiries into the principles of steam-engines, gas-works, and iron-bridges. I pass, therefore, at once, to a more congenial topic, viz. the potteries of Staffordshire, which present to the scientific observer an infinite variety of his favourite objects of contemplation.

After passing a delightful morning in strolling over the beautiful domain of Trentham, which art and nature have combined their efforts to adorn, I proceeded on foot to pay a visit to the potteries, at a few miles distance. The appearance of this seat of industry, viewed from the neighbouring eminences, is so extremely striking, that I scarcely feel able to describe it, but Byron shall do it for me,—

“’Tis a most living landscape; midst
the wave
Of woods and corn fields, stand the
abodes of man,
Scatter’d at intervals, and clouds of
smoke,
Arising from ten thousand roofs.”

Your eye embraces at one view a variety of large towns, villages, and manufactories, situated in a fertile plain, and spreading far away into the distance, to the extent of ten or twelve miles, surmounted by a canopy of smoke, so dense, that the lurid cloud which eternally overhangs the metropolis, seems, in comparison, but a rarefied vapour. You must not, however, imagine, when I speak of their extending ten or twelve miles, that the whole space is closely built over; on the contrary, it is occupied

by several distinct towns, though the roads of communication between them, sprinkled more or less thickly with habitations and manufactories, form in every direction connecting links, and render them in fact but one community. The first of these you arrive at, journeying northwards, is called Lane End, the road from which leads directly through the heart of the other pottery-towns, the principal of which are Lane Delft, Fenton, Stoke-upon-Trent, Cobridge, Etruria, Shelton, Hanley, and Burslem; terminating northwards at a place called Green Lane, on the borders of Cheshire. In the surrounding country they are spoken of collectively, by the general appellation of The Pottery.

On entering these towns, the first peculiarity that arrests the stranger’s attention is the irregular and straggling style in which they are built; for, having most of them sprung up from small beginnings into their present magnitude, in less than half a century, the additions have been made from time to time just as necessity demanded, but without any determinate plan, or the slightest regard to appearance and orderly arrangement. The result has been the strangest confusion that ’tis possible to conceive. Milton’s line,

“Wild, without rule or art,”

was never before half so happily illustrated. The contrasts of meanness and magnificence which meet the view are equally striking; the humble hut of the artisan stands in immediate contact with the palace of his employer, and splendid mansions rear their heads amid the sulphureous fumes and vapours of the reeking pot-works. Every thing, in short, announces that appearances are here quite a secondary consideration when opposed to utility, and that the genius of industry alone presides: taste and elegance in the buildings are therefore but little cherished at present. In many other respects, the aspect of the pottery-towns is equally singular, and strikingly proclaims their recent origin. You pass, in two minutes,

from a crowded street into a meadow or a corn-field; and, amidst shops and factories, you continually stumble upon what was not long since a farm-house, and which yet retains somewhat of its rural, cottage-like character, wholly distinct from that of the mercantile edifices which have sprung up around it. Figure to yourself a tract of country, the surface of which, cut, scarred, burnt, and ploughed up in every direction, displays a heterogeneous mass of hovels and palaces, farm houses and factories, chapels and churches, canals and coal-pits, corn-fields and brick-fields, gardens and furnaces, jumbled together in "most admired disorder," and you will have a pretty correct idea of the Staffordshire potteries. Then pervade the space your fancy has thus pictured, with a suffocating smoke, vomitted forth incessantly from innumerable fires, and the thing will be complete. The people, however, who pass their lives amid this dingy atmosphere, this "palpable obscure," this worse than Egyptian darkness, seem to experience no inconvenience from it; and, in fact, to be scarcely sensible of the existence of the evil. One of them asked me, with most amusing simplicity, "whether London was not a terribly smoky place to live in?" The inhabitants, nevertheless, I repeat, though not blessed with the rosy cheeks we generally see in country-folks, appear to enjoy good health, with the exception of the colliers, and a few pallid mortals employed in the preparation of certain deleterious articles made use of in the manufacture of pottery.

The population of this vast beehive, with that of the contiguous town, Newcastle-under-Lyme, exceeds 60,000 souls, and is constantly increasing. To give you some faint idea of the rapidity with which it advances, I extract from the returns of 1811 and 1821 a comparative view of the numbers of inhabitants of two or three of the principal towns at those periods:—

	1811.	1821.
Burslem	8625	9699
Hanley	4481	5622
Lane End	4980	7100
Shelton	5487	7325
	<hr/> 23523	<hr/> 29746

The proportion of those who are connected with trade and manufactures, of course, preponderates greatly over the other classes. In Burslem, which contains 2087 families, sixty only are described as employed in agriculture; and in Hanley, which contains 1157 families, only three!

You will, of course, expect me to say a few words upon the manners, customs, and tone of thinking, of the neighbourhood; and I will therefore endeavour to gratify you. Of the political opinions of the people in general I scarcely feel qualified to offer a decided opinion, though I believe, as in most other places, the majority of the rich are of the Tory party, and the whole of the lower classes of the liberal or radical. With regard to religious matters I can speak more confidently, for sectarianism has certainly made this her chosen seat; I suspect I speak greatly within compass, when I assert, that two-thirds of the population are dissenters, of one denomination or another: Ebenezer, Zion, Bethel, and New Jerusalem, chapels, offend the orthodox eye at every turning; and in Hanley and Shelton alone, three new conventicles have been built during the present year, while in the whole of the potteries there are but four churches, which would not contain one-tenth of the population. Of the names and characters of the different sects I know but little; there are Independents, Wesleyans, Whitfieldites, Calvinists, Presbyterians, and heaven knows what beside. At Cobridge there is a Roman Catholic chapel, with a seminary attached to it; and a Unitarian place of worship, now building at Hanley, will be opened early in 1824. The evil arising from the want of church-room has long been sensibly felt; for many who frequent the dissenting chapels are not so much attracted there by inclination as driven by necessity, not being able

to gain admission to the churches, where the vile system of seat-selling, and locking up pews by individuals who seldom visit them, prevails far too extensively. Truly was it said the other day by a public writer of the neighbourhood, "Every thing has thrived, and prospered, and improved around us, but the temples of our devotions." Measures, however, are at length in progress for diminishing the grievance; and the old church of Stoke is immediately to be pulled down, to make room for a larger one. This, which is the parish church of the district, and was built centuries before the potteries existed, will scarcely hold 600 persons: the new building will be adapted to the accommodation of thrice the number. To forward this undertaking, the Dean of Lichfield has generously given £500l. from his own purse, in addition to £500l. towards erecting churches in other parts of the potteries. Three thousand pounds more are to be raised by parish rates in the years 1824-5; and some of the inhabitants have voluntarily subscribed upwards of £200l. A Report from the Committee appointed to superintend the business, which was read in September last, announced that "the church-people had contributed to promote it, even beyond their power;" so that, after all, you see, there was nothing ridiculous in that lofty boast of a certain swaggering tragic hero, which has so often made us smile,—

"I will strive with things impossible;
Yea, get the better of them."

Prevalent, however, as the sectarian spirit is here, it does not seem to have tinged the tempers and manners of the people in general with that sourness and gloom which I have elsewhere observed to proceed from it. They appear, on the contrary, to be for the most part a jovial, thoughtless, hearty set of mortals, full of good fellowship, strongly attached to convivial meetings, and no enemies to the good things of this life, professing the heedless philosophy of Master Sly, the tinker, "Drink, and let the world slide!" Societies of Free-

masons, Odd Fellows, and Druids, are very numerous; and the ancient reputation of Staffordshire for good living is here most vigorously maintained. Dr. Plot, who visited these parts a century and a half ago, says, "Meats and drinks are no where better or more plentiful than in this county;" and I can honestly aver, that what he asserted in 1680, is equally applicable to 1823. The Staffordshire ale is unquestionably the best in England.

Literature and literary pursuits experience at present no remarkable encouragement, but the progress of education and refinement promises speedily to work a material change in this respect. Of course, in such a state of things, few productions issue from the local presses. I saw a folio Bible, and one or two other standard works, which were printed at Burslem, but there was nothing to admire in their typographical execution. A newspaper, however, that certain indication of growing civilization and intelligence, has been established at Hanley, under the title of "The Pottery Gazette," and meets with a considerable share of encouragement, which the rapid growth of population will doubtless, ere long, materially increase: it is conducted with much spirit by a gentleman of talent and independence. (Concluded at p. 395.)

ADDRESS TO OCTOBER,

WRITTEN ON A COLD SNOWY DAY
IN THAT MONTH, 1819.

Odd zooks! October! what can be your meaning,

To bring such weather in your very middle!

To Winter, though you've usually a leaning,

To me your conduct is a perfect riddle.

I am not in such matters over-nice,
But did not look as yet for snow and ice.

Though I attack with valour most Quixotic,

Mistake me not for any sordid elf;

Believe me, I am much too patriotic,

To care one halfpenny about myself.

The summer months I may conceive excel,

But those of Winter please me very well.

For often have I gazed with raptur-
 pensive,
 When morn from bed has brought me
 a divorce,
 Where virgin snows a shroud formed
 most extensive
 For all around, and Nature seemed a
 corse.

A lovely corse! just entering upon bliss,
 And fitted for a better world than this.

But thus attiring, Nature to my fancy,
 Gives what is still more fruitful of de-
 light,
 For I a living object think I can see
 A beauty putting on the robe of night.
 Nor wonder Winter bids the day soon
 close,
 To speed the favourite moment of re-
 pose.

I like to see too, Phoebus so CRIM-CON-
 ISH;—

Whatever that way tends, folks like to
 see;
 (However Priests and Sages may ad-
 monish,

It ever has been so, and so will be).
 I like to see fair Snow—Frost's lawful
 bride,
 Warmed by the Sun, attempting to back-
 slide.

It is so pretty, when Day's Orb is woo-
 ing,

To mark how soon THE FAIR begins
 to MELT;
 Though faint his ray, yet soon to her
 undoing

Relenting tears confess his influence
 felt.

But Frost pursues the wanton, and o'er
 ta'en,
 She his becomes (AN ICICLE) again.

Such sights I love to see, and to remem-
 ber;

But SOLOMON and I are both agreed,
 "There is a season for all things." De-
 cember

Would bring them soon enough to
 meet our need

In England's isle. Some islands, and one
 isthmus,

Less modest, Midsummer desire at
 Christmas.

Your frolics, Dame October, are not
 charming,

And these, if tolerated once in you,
 May form a precedent the most alarm-
 ing;

For after this what won't November do?
 Why, if to Snow admitted your bold
 claims,
 He'll presently with ice block up the
 Thames.

Such weather would the suicidal season
 Make worse than e'er was known:
 our patriots prime

Might hang themselves, though surely
 without reason,

For that would be to THROW AWAY
 THEIR TIME

ON OTHER PEOPLE'S WORK. But who
 can doubt

That they must perish if they could not
 spout.

Refrain ye then from all these storms
 and snowing,

And be, October, what you used to be;
 Let invalids who to the coast are going,
 View summer's last ray brightening
 all the sea.

Your biting blast may blow, without
 offence,

But snow will do a month or six weeks
 hence.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

CAROLINE begs us to submit the follow-
 ing passage to the consideration of those
 correspondents who have urged us to
 resume our series of Ghost-Stories:—

"One strong argument to prove that
 relations of spectres are false may be
 drawn from the circumstance that the
 pretended goblins have never appeared
 to more than ONE person at a time: in
 other words, it seldom happens to above
 one person in a company to be possessed
 in that high degree by spleen and melan-
 choly, which generates the idea of such
 appearances."

We are obliged to Aerostaticus, but
 must decline his offer at present. The
 Ancient Ballads are come to hand. D.
 is right, but the point is not material
 [see p. 24]. A Reprint of No. 3 is in
 the press.

RECEIVED.—Lucy—Tom—T. B.—
 Kink—A. P.—Le Clair—Judith—
 N. O. G.—and Haman.

THE NIC-NAC;

OR,

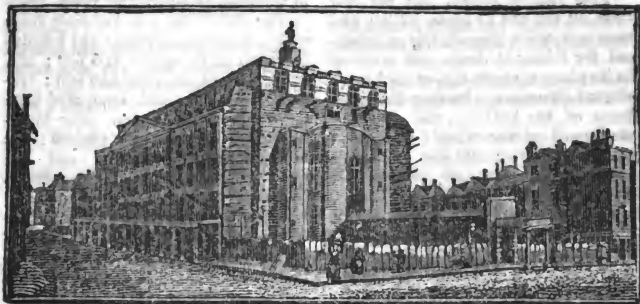
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 50.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1823.

Vol. I.

"Praise us as we are tested; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKSPEARE.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, 1809.

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE, SECTION 16.—Although Garrick relinquished all ostensible connection with the Stage after the year 1776, he still continued to assist authors and performers with his advice; and the individuals to whom he had disposed of his property in the theatre, amongst whom the late Mr. Sheridan was the most conspicuous, derived great benefit from the aid of his experience in theatrical affairs. They were not, however, suffered long to enjoy it, as Garrick died in 1779; and from that period may pretty accurately be dated the commencement of the decline and fall of Drury Lane Theatre. Occasional gleams of prosperity enlivened the gloom of its adversity; but its difficulties nevertheless continued to increase, till it was at length brought to a miserable state of debt and neglect.

With the circumstances which have led to this catastrophe we have no concern. It will be sufficient for us to mention the two most remarkable events connected with the history of this theatre, between the period of Garrick's retirement, and its destruction: viz. the appearance of Mrs.

Siddons there, as Isabella, on the 12th of October, 1782;* and that of Kemble, as Hamlet, on the 30th of September, 1783:—its demolition took place in 1791-2.

We have already mentioned, (vide section 12) that the original design for this theatre was the production of Sir Christopher Wren; but the many injudicious deviations which were made from Wren's plan, and the subsequent alterations it underwent, had doubtless destroyed all resemblance to the design first produced by Sir Christopher. The exterior displayed nothing remarkable. Of the interior a very correct view is given in "Londina Illustrata." It consisted of one complete circle of boxes, with two tiers of side boxes, on a level with the shilling and two-shilling galleries. To the magnificence which now characterizes our theatres, it had no pretensions; but it possessed a far stronger recommendation. Its dimensions were not so extravagant as to preclude two thirds of the audience

* She had previously performed minor characters there, during Garrick's management.

from any hope of hearing or seeing what was passing upon the stage; a proof of which is, that the front seat of the two-shilling gallery was looked upon as by far the best situation in the house, and was always occupied by very respectable people.

This theatre closed, for the last time, on the 4th of June, 1791; and measures were immediately commenced for taking it down, and erecting in its place a much larger and more elegant structure. During the progress of the building, the company performed at the King's and Haymarket theatres; and the new house being INTERNALLY completed in 1794, was opened on the 12th of March, with a selection of sacred music. The performance of the drama commenced on the 21st of April, with "Macbeth," and "The Virgin Unmasked;" on which occasion Kemble spoke a prologue, written by the Right Hon. Major General Fitzpatrick; and Miss Farren an epilogue, written by Mr. Colman. Some passages in the latter, which it was thought savoured too much of levity, and appeared to set, fate at defiance, have been greatly censured; particularly by writers against the stage, who have commented upon them in a very edifying manner. The following were the most obnoxious lines:—

- "Our pile is rock, more durable than brass;
- "Our decorations, gossamer and gas,
- "Weighty, yet airy in effect—our plan;
- "Solid, though light—like a vain alderman.
- "Blow, wind! come, wrack! in ages yet unborn
- "Our castle's strength shall laugh a siege to scorn."
- "The very ravages of fire we scout,
- "For we have wherewithal to put it out.
- "In ample reservoirs our firm reliance,
- "Whose streams set conflagration at defiance."

That these lines were merely an ebullition of enthusiasm at the completion of this beautiful structure; and that Mr. Colman in writing them had not the remotest idea that they would be termed presumptuous and

impious, no reasonable man can doubt. The boast, however, was ill-judged at all events; and, as the result has proved, impotent and ridiculous; for before the lapse of fifteen years, this "pile more durable than brass," exhibited nothing but a mass of smoking and unsightly ruins.

The length of the building from east to west was 320 feet; the breadth from north to south 155 feet; and the height of the roof 118 feet; tremendous dimensions, compared with those of the old house. The boxes held 1828 persons; the pit 800; the two-shilling gallery 675; and the one-shilling gallery 308: total 3611. The receipts, supposing the house to be completely filled, 4771 6s.; i. e. at 6s. the boxes, and 3s. the pit. The house was of immense size. It contained eight private boxes on each side of the pit, besides half a dozen on each side of the stage, in the same manner as at present. There were two complete tiers of public boxes; and half tiers on a level with the galleries. The decorations were magnificent, and the first view of the house imposingly grand; but for the purposes of seeing and hearing, no theatre could be more badly calculated. Of the appearance of the exterior, the above view conveys a very correct idea. If completed according to the original design, it would have been an ornament to the metropolis; but the funds failing, we believe, it was left in a shabby, unfinished state; and while the north and south sides were handsomely faced with stone, the others presented nothing to the view but rugged, dirty piles of brick-work.

This house was totally destroyed by fire, on the 24th of February, 1809, but as the details of so recent an event are in every body's recollection, and would occupy much of our space, we think it unnecessary to insert them. An account of the erection of the present theatre, with a view, will be given in the next section. —(Resumed at page 461)

TOBACCO.

Our British Solomon, James the

First, made a formidable attack upon this "invention of Satan," in a learned performance, which he called a "Counterblaste to Tobacco." It is printed in the edition of his works by Barker and Bill, London, 1616. His Majesty in the course of his work informs us, that "some of the gentry of the land bestow three, some four hundred pounds a year upon this precious stink;" and concludes this bitter blast of his sulphureous invective against the said transmarine weed, with the following peroration: "Have you not reason then to be ashamed, and to forbear this filthy novelty, so basely grounded, so foolishly received, and so grossly mistaken in the right use thereof! In such abuse sinning against God, and taking also thereby (look to it ye that take snuff in profusion) the marks and notes of vanity upon you; by the custom thereof making yourselves to be wondered at by all foreign civil nations; and by all strangers that come among you, to be scorned and contemned. A custom loathsome to the eye, hateful to the nose, harmful to the brain, dangerous to the lungs, and in the black stinking fume thereof nearest resembling the horrible Stygian smoke of the pit that is bottomless!"

Shortly after the publication of the king's anathema against this Indian weed, a divine being detected by a neighbour in the act of smoking, was reproached by him for it, as a vile habit, which ought not to be indulged in by any one who entertained a proper respect for their wise monarch, who had written a treatise "against the use of base tobacco"—"Aye," replied the divine, "against base tobacco, I grant; but mine is as good as ever was smoked."

THE STAFFORDSHIRE POTTERIES

(Concluded from page 391.)

There is also in the last-mentioned town a scientific and literary meeting, graced the with high-sounding title of the Pottery Philosophical Society; but of the members' talents I know

nothing, of their taste I cannot augur very favourably; for, by a late resolution, they excluded from their library all novels, plays, romances, and works of imagination. Who will pretend to talk of Beotian dulness after this! Book-clubs are rather numerous, also national and Sunday schools.

Upon the origin of earthenware-manufactories in Staffordshire, and the particulars of the process, I have gleaned little worth repeating. The latter you may find pretty clearly described in Aikin's "Thirty Miles round Manchester," but the former topic is clothed in much obscurity. All that can be learned with certainty, is, that pot-works were first established at Burslem, probably three or four centuries ago; but they were for a long time so inconsiderable, that Speed, in his enumeration of "commodities" of the county (1610), is totally silent upon the subject; and Dr. Plott, whose work was published about eighty years later, says "the sale of pots is chiefly confined to the poor crate-men, who carry them at their backs all over the country." Even so recently as 1760 or 1770, a handsome tea-pot, manufactured in Staffordshire, appears to have been looked upon as a thing to be wondered at, a kind of prodigy. In the works of Sir Charles Handbry Williams, there occurs a poem, called "Isabella," which describes the morning occupations and visitors of Lady Isabella Montague, and says one of her admirers, a Mr. Bateman—

"To please the noble dame, the courtly squire

Produc'd a tea-pot, made in Staffordshire!

So Venus look'd, and with such longing eyes,

When Paris first produc'd the golden prize.

'Such works as this,' she cries, 'can England do?

It equals Dresden, and excels St. Cloud; All modern China now shall hide its head,

And e'en Chantilly must give o'er her trade.

Forlace, let Flanders bear away the bell; In finest linen, let the Dutch excel;

For prettiest stuffs, let Ireland first be
nam'd;
And for best-fancied silks, let France be
famed;
Do thou, thrice-happy England, still
prepare
Thy clay, and build thy fame on earth-
enware!"

Upon the amazing increase and improvement in the manufacture of English earthenware during the last half century, it would be impertinent to dilate, as the former is universally known, and your cups, plates, and dishes, must remind you of the latter at every meal. I cannot, however, forbear attempting to give you some idea of the ratio in which the trade in this article still advances, by subjoining an extract from "A Comparative Statement of the Value of British Earthenware exported, and of Foreign Earthenware imported, during the years 1821 and 1822," which was issued from the Custom House in April last:—

	In the year 1821.
Value of exports . .	£423,399 12s. 7d.
Value of imports . .	£4,992 18s. 4d.
	In the year 1822.
Value of exports . .	£489,732 17s. 1d.
Value of imports . .	£6,695 0s. 7d.

Hence you will perceive, that the value of earthenware exported advanced nearly 70,000*l.* in a single year; and the bustle now visible in the potteries seems to presage that the next return will exhibit a correspondent or still greater increase. The consignments were chiefly to Ireland, North America, the East and West Indies, Germany, Holland, and Russia. France received very little, and the other European nations comparatively nothing. The imports were principally from France, the East Indies, and China: the total value of ware (principally jars and vases), received from the two latter, in 1822, 1940*l.* 14s. 8d; yet a century ago, England depended almost entirely upon China for the supply of this article.

The circumstances which have mainly contributed to produce this prosperity (aided by the national spirit of enterprise) are the increase of canal-navigation, and the exhaustless sup-

ply of coal which the earth in the neighbourhood affords. Of the former, the potteries may be said to form the very centre; and, of the consumption of coal, some estimate may be formed from the statement, that 8060 tons are burned weekly in the manufactories alone, to say nothing of the immense fires which are kept up both night and day in the private houses: the people, not having the fear of a salamander before their eyes, seldom taking the trouble to extinguish them. Half the district, in fact, is undermined, and the walls of many buildings betray what is passing beneath them, by fearful rents and deviations from the perpendicular, where the foundations have partially given way; yet the inhabitants scarcely seem aware of their danger, or, if awakened to a sense of it by some warning more serious than usual, forget it again in a day or two, and relapse into their previous indolent security,—

"They start, when some alarming awful
shock
Strikes through their wounded hearts
the sudden dread;
But their hearts wounded, like the
wounded air,
Soon close."

The potteries cannot boast of having produced any noted writers, with the exception of Elijah Fenton, who was a native of Shelton. The house, in which he was born is still standing, and at present is occupied by a Mr. Woodward. Dr. Johnson tells us that he "sought intelligence of Fenton, among his relations, in his native county, but could not obtain it;" and you will therefore be little surprised to learn, that what Johnson was unable to gather fifty years ago, I failed to procure in the present day. The very name of Fenton, in fact, appears to be unknown in the neighbourhood; and it was, therefore, of little service to make inquiries respecting a man whom few had ever before heard mentioned: so true it is, that a poet, like a prophet, is least honoured in his own country. I am not certain whether Wedgwood, who may almost be said to have created the potteries of

Staffordshire, was a native of the district; but, if so, his name should never be forgotten when speaking of its eminent men.

I am sorry to qualify this generally favourable description of the potteries with a few notices of their defects, but truth demands it.

"They have their praise. Now mark a spot or two,
Which so much duty would do well to
purge."

In the first place, the system of police is wretchedly defective; in plainer terms, there appears to be scarcely any police at all, and the rabble are therefore at liberty to indulge their brutal passions and knavish propensities without restraint. The innumerable petty thefts which daily pass unpunished, illustrate the latter position, and the former was strikingly exemplified during my late sojourn in the neighbourhood. The adjoining borough of Newcastle had just been the scene of a contested election; and the defeated candidate, being a resident in the potteries, the potters, vastly exasperated at this rejection of their champion, "vowed vengeance, and performed it too." Not an individual from Newcastle, suspected of having voted on the wrong side, could for some time pass along without experiencing gross abuse, if not actual violence; and the women connected with the obnoxious voters, who attended the pottery markets, were brutally attacked by beasts in the shape of men, their persons maltreated, and their goods destroyed. Yet Messrs. Dogberry and Verges, the worthy constables, slept soundly and quietly at their posts, whilst lawless proceedings were carried on with impunity for hours, which, under a well-organized police, would not have been suffered to continue as many minutes. Measures, however, are in contemplation for suppressing this crying evil, and to the town of Hanley is due the honour of taking the lead in promoting them. The state of the roads and footways is likewise very defective; they are, in many parts, in vile condition, and are neither

watched nor lighted, though coal costs little beyond the trouble of carrying it, and gas could therefore be brought into general use throughout the potteries, as it already is in Newcastle, at an extremely cheap rate, and greatly to the well-being of the inhabitants. A few more blemishes might be noticed, but I will not make so ungrateful a return for the hospitable reception I experienced here, as to dwell any longer upon "the nakedness of the land," and point out its deficiencies with invidious minuteness; therefore, farewell!

THE DRUID IN LONDON.

Oct. 7. 1823.

TORTURE.

A CONSCIENTIOUS Spanish judge having observed the effect of the rack on supposed criminals, in making them ready to confess any thing, in order to get released from the torture, felt some strong scruples respecting the conviction of accused persons by such methods; insomuch that, something which had happened in a particular case, determined him upon trying an experiment.

It was formerly a capital crime in that country to kill a horse or a mule, and he happened to have one of the former species which he very much esteemed. In prosecution of his scheme, he took care one night to keep all his servants employed, so that no one but his groom could go into the stable. But, when all were afterwards fast asleep in their beds, he stole thither himself, and cut off the tail of his horse, by which wound the creature bled to death. Great confusion, it may be supposed, followed the discovery of the mischief on the succeeding morning, when the master, upon being informed of what had happened, appeared highly incensed. Strict enquiries being made about the person who could have committed the crime, the other servants all found means to prove their innocence, so that the whole imputation rested on the groom, who was apprehended and committed to prison. The poor fellow on his arraignment pleaded not

guilty; but the presumption being very strong against him, he was ordered to the rack, where the extremity of torture soon wrung from him a confession of the crime, he chusing to submit to death, rather than the misery he was undergoing. Upon this confession he had sentence of hanging passed upon him, when his master (who having been prosecutor, could not of course be one of his judges) went to the tribunal, and there exposed the fallibility of confessions obtained by such means, by owning the fact himself, and disclosing the motives that had influenced his making the experiment; since which time the practice has been discontinued of applying the torture in any cases that are determined in their public courts.

MAGAZINE GLEANINGS.

HENRY 8th was walking on a terrace of the palace at Havering Bower in Essex, when Anne Boleyn was executed. By the firing of guns, or some other signal, he had the speediest intelligence of this despicable assassination, and immediately exclaimed—

“here I stand,
As jolly a widower as any in the land.”
(“Gentleman’s.”)

ROYAL PUNS.—When Judge Day returned from India, the minister presented to his late majesty that knighthood would not only be acceptable, but that it was an honour to which the judge was entitled. “Poh, poh!” said the king, “I cannot turn day into night; it is impossible.” At the next levee, which took place about Christmas, his majesty was again entreated to knight Mr. Day. The king enquired if he was married, and was answered in the affirmative. “Well, well,” said the good-natured monarch, “then let him be introduced, and I will work a couple of miracles; I will not only turn Day into Knight, but I will make Lady Day at Christmas.”

(“Lady’s.”)

EPIGRAM.

’Tis call’d by the wise an infallible rule,
That “at forty a man’s a PHYSICIAN or
FOOL.”

And some in the maxim to fail are so
loth,

They manage at forty to pass for them
BOTH. [“Ibid.”]

ARGUMENTUM BACULINUM.—The following novel method of removing diseases is communicated by Mr. I. Bingham, Surgeon:—

Divines, altho’ their hearers dose,
With wond’rous patience will ha-
rangue ’em;
To ease my patients of their woes,
I quicker means devise—

I. BINGHAM.

The Wit’s Nunchion.

LINNET, a strolling player, being once at Hammersmith with his company, expressed a desire to play at Chelsea, but was informed it was under the control of a very inflexible magistrate, particularly averse to giving any encouragement to plays or other amusements. However, notwithstanding this seeming insurmountable difficulty, Linnet met with a friend, a gentleman, who wrote a warm recommendatory letter for him to the obdurate magistrate, and gave him assurance of his meeting with success; with this encouragement, Linnet boldly pushed to the justice’s house, directing his whole company to proceed to Chelsea, order a dinner at the Swan, and regale themselves; this mandate was cheerfully complied with, and the eventful letter was delivered according to direction. But what was the purport of this letter? Instead of that which should secure a welcome and support, it was one that menaced the reader with a sudden scene of horror.—’Tis proper to explain.

Then thus it was: the comedy of the “Bold Stroke for a Wife” had been played a few nights before, and old Linnet, on this occasion, resolving to make a grand appearance, had put

on the stage waistcoat he had worn in the Colonel; in one of the pockets of which, was the letter supposed to be sent by the Colonel's friend to Obadiah Prim, upon hearing that the real Simon Pure is actually come, which if not prevented, must ruin the Colonel's design upon the cautious quaker. Judge of the magistrate's surprise on opening the supposed letter of recommendation, when he found it begin thus:

" 'There is a design formed to rob the house and cut your throat.' The justice rang his bell—a servant appeared—'Where is the man that brought this letter?'—'In the hall, sir.'—'Call him up directly.' While the servant was employed in going to fetch up the unconscious culprit, old Quorum read on:—

" 'The gang, whereof I am one, though now resolved to rob no more'—(here old Linnet made his appearance)—'Well, friend,' says the justice, 'you belong to a GANG: how many are there of you?'—'We are fourteen in all, sir.'—'Fourteen! and where are you all?'—'At the Swan.'—'Indeed! Oh, very well; you have all your tools at the Swan, have you? I'll take care of you and your tools presently.'—'Many thanks to you, sir: Squire —— told me you would encourage us.'—'Ay, was it he sent you to my house?'—'Yes, sir.'—'Well, and when do you intend to begin this grand affair?'—'We always begin about seven o'clock, sir.'—'You do!—here Thomas, here, seize this daring, hardened old villain; he and his gang are coming to rob and murder my family this night, and all their horrid tools are at the Swan public house?'—'I did not think this of you,' says the servant to Linnet. —'What, do you know the fellow, sirrah?'—'Yes, sir, he is master of the play.'—'A player! and are not you an open and avowed murderer?'—'Oh Lord, sir, what do you mean?'—'Look at this letter, you hang-dog! Did you not deliver this to me?'—Who can describe the innocent Linnet's astonishment upon the discovery of his mistake? 'Oh, dear sir, I beg your pardon, here's

Squire ——'s letter, I hope this will satisfy you.'—'Hold him till I see what's here.' On the perusal of the real letter, his worship's countenance was changed from a savage ferocity to a most placid smile. He immediately dismissed the innocent aggressor, with a full permission for his performing, with this piece of wholesome advice—Never to forget his part again.

ADVANTAGES IN LONDON.—At a small baker's at the Court-end of the town, any lady or gentleman so disposed, may step in, and have, as we are informed by a notice in chalk over the door, his or her "VITALS baked here;" and not far from this spot resides an industrious individual, whose avocation cannot be too generally made known, as it may save many families the very considerable expense generally attendant upon removing from one house to another. "MESSUAGES," says he, on a board slung out at his window, "carried to all parts of the town, by me, TIMOTHY TRUDGE."

SPANISH WIT.—There is an old story, but it is none the worse for that, of a certain King of Spain, from whom, by the fate of battle, a large extent of territory had been taken away; he nevertheless continued to receive from his courtiers the title of GREAT. "His greatness," said a Spaniard, "is like that of a ditch, which increases in proportion to the ground it loses."

ALEXANDER STEVENS once established at a tavern in Nassau Street, Dublin, a kind of debating society, which was known by the name of Nassau Court. The subjects discussed, were always of a humorous nature, and all ranks of people were admitted as auditors. The greatest decorum and regularity were exacted; and fines were invariably levied and enforced, for every infraction of the rules, however slight and trivial. A certain nobleman, not a little renowned for his folly and extrava-

gance; having appeared in Court with his hat on, he was formally tried for the same. The Gentlemen of the Jury could not long consult in a case so evident and plain, and were just about to deliver a verdict of guilty, when Stevens, who presided at the proceedings, after remarking, that in free countries, all defendants were under the judge's protection, said that the noble lord could not be found guilty of wearing a hat, because he had no head!

THE WOOL-SACK.—Colman the elder and the late Charles Bannister, dining one day with Lord Erskine, the Ex-Chancellor, in the course of conversation on rural affairs, boasted that he kept on his pasture land nearly a thousand sheep. "I perceive then," said Colman, with an arch smile, "your lordship still has an eye to the wool-sack."

ON A PORTRAIT

IN THE LAST EXHIBITION, INTENDED
TO REPRESENT A LADY.

Painters, despair, in vain your efforts
rise,

The lovely Catharine your art defies.

Dim are your colors, and your touches
faint:

An Angel only can an Angel paint.

A CHURCH GOER.—A lady, who was pressed for time in the progress of some business, which was very important to her, and who was going to her attorney to consult him about the proceedings to avoid a circuitous route, went in at one door of a church, during the time of divine service, and passed out at the other. In reply to some reproof which she received for having done so, she said, 'You must acknowledge that I am a thorough church-woman.'

A LUCKY THOUGHT.—An Astrologer of the 15th century having foretold the death of a beautiful woman, whom Louis XI. loved, and who happened to die according to his prediction, the King was so enraged that he ordered him into

his presence. 'You who foresee all,' said Louis, 'tell me when you yourself shall die.' The man, who without being a conjuror perceived the anger of the King, replied, 'I shall die three days before your Majesty.' Fear and superstition got the better of resentment; and to preserve his own life, Louis was very careful of that of the Astrologer.

ABEL, the German composer, and professional partner of Bach, was so attached to the viol da gamba, in the performance of which he excelled every cotemporary practitioner, as to prefer its thin, grating tones, to the notes of all other instruments. At a dinner party one day given by the late Lord Sandwich at the Admiralty, the various attractions of the different musical instruments forming the subject of conversation, his lordship proposed that every gentleman should say which of them was his favourite; when Abel, after hearing with constrained patience, one guest name the organ, another the hautboy, another the clarinet, &c. &c. but no one name the Viol da Gamba, suddenly arose from his seat, and left the room: exclaiming—"O dere be de brute in de world; dere be dose who no love de king of all de instrument."

This anecdote was communicated by the late Dr. Walcot, who was one of the above company.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Lancashire work alluded to, was that mentioned by Clio. When shall we hear again from TRUTH? J. Carr will find a communication at the place agreed upon. Sarah's "Lines" may perhaps appear. What has become of our old friend Bob Short? We have received a fragment of a Tale called "Arien of Feversham," but not the commencement.

RECEIVED.—Clio (9), "Epigrams" by A Constant Reader, Salem, T. C., K., Somnolus, and Iingo.

ERRATA.—Page 386, column 1, line 24, for "meetings" read "meeting." Line 29 read "lying on his bed."

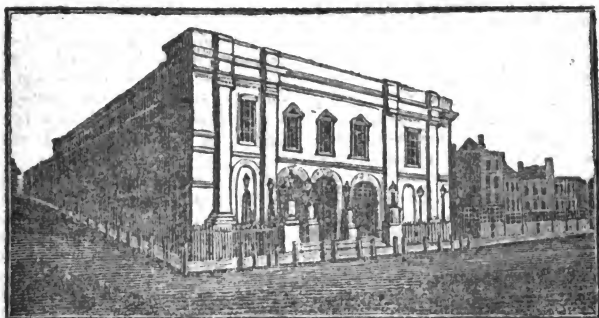
THE NIC-NAC:

OR,
ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

N^o. 51. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove:
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.



DRURY-LANE THEATRE, 1812.

HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE, SECTION 17. The destruction of the old Drury Lane Theatre by fire occurred about eleven o'clock in the night of Friday, Feb. 24, 1809. It being Lent, no performance took place on that evening, or it is most probable that hundreds would have perished, as the flames spread with inconceivable rapidity. A new opera, called the "Circassian Bride," had been produced on the 23rd; and it is remarkable that in the bills of that day, as if the impending calamity had been foreseen, no subsequent performance of any description was announced.

For a long period, all steps towards rebuilding the theatre proved ineffectual; the ruins remained untouched for nearly three years. To detain our readers with a recital of the incumbrances and difficulties with which the concern was burdened, would, we imagine, prove to them neither pleasing nor profitable: nor, indeed, does it come at all within the plan of this article. The restoration of the theatre was mainly effected by the indefatigable activity of Mr. Whitbread at a time when assurances that it would speedily be rebuilt, had been so often

made, and had so invariably been followed by exposure of their futility, that the town, sickened by "hope deferred," had long ceased to entertain any expectation of their being ever fulfilled. It was therefore with no small surprise that the dwellers in the vicinity, on the 21st of Oct. 1811, beheld numerous workmen busily employed in removing the ruins. It was soon discovered that all obstacles to its re-erection had been overcome; and, under the superintendence of Mr. B. Wyatt, the architect, the present gorgeous pile "rose like an exhalation," and opened its doors to the public on the 10th of Oct. 1812, with "Hamlet," and "The Devil to Pay."

It will be seen by the above view, that the present building does not stand on precisely the same ground as its predecessor. The grand front now reaches to Brydges Street; while its extent eastward is proportionably curtailed; a circumstance which has caused many a spectator to exclaim—

—"When I see thee push'd
Back from the narrow street that
christen'd thee,
I know not why they call thee
DRURY LANE."

In the exterior of this theatre there is nothing worthy of praise. It is a plain, unornamented mass of brick-work, put together without the slightest attempt at architectural elegance; and since the view from which our engraving is executed was taken, it has been rendered still more unseemingly by the addition of a clumsy shapeless portico to the principal front in Brydges Street, surmounted by a statue of Shakspeare. Its interior, however, amply compensates, by its exquisite beauty, for the external poverty. The body of the house presents three-fourths of a circle, and is mostly richly decorated. There are three tiers of boxes; besides seven slip-boxes on each side of the lower gallery. There are also seven private boxes on each side of the pit, with which they are nearly on a level. The house will hold upwards of 2,800 persons: viz. the boxes 1,200; the pit 850; the lower gallery 480; and the upper gallery 280. The entrance to the boxes is magnificent, and admirably planned; in which respect this theatre possesses an advantage over every other place of amusement in London. The saloon is a most noble room, eighty-six feet in length; and worthy of being dedicated to better purposes. It has been truly remarked that, in the construction of this house, the architect appears to have principally studied the accommodation of those who are its worst visitors. We have been told, indeed, over and over again, that the saloons of a theatre are intended as conveniences to such of the respectable part of the audience as may stand in need of refreshment: but this weak pretext is unworthy notice.

From 1812 till 1819 the affairs of this house were conducted by a set of gentlemen amateurs, called the Committee of Management, but their utter incompetency for the task having brought the concern to the verge of ruin, the proprietors were compelled to eject them, and offer the theatre for a term of years, to the highest bidder. Mr. Elliston was the successful candidate, and under his superintendence the house has once more

become the most popular of all our places of amusement. (Resumed at p. 17, vol. ii.)

THE LONDON TOPOGRAPHER.

NO. III.

PERHAPS those persons' are to be envied, who can plod on through their existence, with the apathetical indifference of an oyster to all that passes around them; shrinking and suffering only when the knife penetrates their own vitals, and caring not a sou what has befallen their ancestors, or what may threaten their contemporaries, or successors: those men will walk from Hyde-Park corner to the Minories, and see nothing but indifferent fine streets, a sumptuous palace here and there, and shops exceedingly well supplied with every sort of exterior luxury, and every kind of internal medicament: happy in the absence of those feelings, which, in the shape of melancholy recollections and painful sympathies, disturb the mind's repose in the intervals of freedom, from those carking cares, intense anxieties, and bitter disappointments, which are the personal lot of all those whose souls are formed of that fine sensitive leaf, which swells and collapses, quivers and palpitates with every touch, and every breath; or rather, who possess souls at all—for not to speak it profanely, it is to me a doubt whether there be not walking on this earth, eating, sleeping, and talking, certain denizens who bear the human form, but who are guiltless of the diviner part of man; and who, when they die, will come but little nearer to the fate of the stocks and stones they so nearly resemble. Life would be a dismal blank without its romance, and the mind of taste would be perpetually waging war with architects, and denouncing builders, were it not for the ideas which associate with the stones and mortar, sometimes so villainously put together. London is rich in these reminiscences; those whose matter-of-fact imaginations will refuse to people St. James's Park with the creations of the poets, and disdain to own their

interest in the spot to Cibber's heroines, may conjure up the form of the royal Charles, the merriest monarch of the land, feeding his ducks and whistling to the gorgeous birds from distant Ind, tenants of the gilded cages which gave the name to that extensive walk, then the green resort of all the high-born and high-bred gallants of the court. The wild and warlike spirit which characterised England in its olden time, the factious and turbulent passions of the nobles, the insatiable ambition of the clergy, and the constant succession of civil wars, occasioned by the pretensions of the numerous claimants, at different periods, to the crown—has tintured the scene of their tumults and their disgraces with melancholy hues; the axe and the faggot too often form the symbols; the reeking pavement runs with blood; and grim heads aloft in horrid state, blackening, and withering in their unnatural exposure to the elements, present a frightful spectacle, happily now confined to the mind's eye. But though sad and painful feelings press on the heart, as we follow the steps of the virtuous and the good—the pious prelate, the brave soldier, the faithful minister, and the lovely female, dragged by the clamor of party, the fanaticism of bigots, or the caprice of tyrants to a dismal scaffold; though soft-eyed pity heaves the sigh, even for the fate of those whose crimes or conduct merited their punishment—the rash Essex, the ungrateful Monmouth, and the fearful mutability of human affairs exhibited in the fall of the proud Somerset; still the imagination revels in sights and scenes whose picturesque splendor strikingly contrasts with the sober character which marks the present day. The well appointed carriage of a Duke, when it rolls eastward, has many rivals to its elegant plainness in the equipages of commoners; and my Lord John, and my Lord Charles, his Grace's brothers, ride their red roans, and drive their tilburies in a very unpretending manner: but the Strand showed another sight in the days of yore, when issuing from his gate to take boat, or mounted on

horseback, the Duke's martial ancestor appeared surrounded by his kinsmen, proud to wear his badge, and attended by a numerous retinue ready to espouse his quarrel or maintain his right of precedence at the sword's point. The hurry and bustle which generally pervades this narrow street is very inimical to reflection; yet there are few parts of London which present so much food for the mind that loves to dwell on other days. The sites of the palaces of our nobles, now only marked by avenues little better, than lanes, which bear their names, remind us of the Hungerfords, the Arundels, and the Buckinghams; and noble deeds rush on the soul. Our walk is a pilgrimage, wherein we pay homage to the great and good, whose ruined shrines, demolished to afford room for the erection of pert untasteful buildings, making their silent appeal to the heart. The first Earl of Craven—charitable to magnanimity, braving the horrors of the pestilence to perform kind offices to the distressed, and standing firm at his post amid the last dreadful plague which ravaged London, in order to preserve peace and quiet in the distracted city—claims our admiration and our reverence; and with him we associate the warrior Monk, his friend and confidant, recalling to mind the exquisite beauty of his countenance, the high imaginings and lofty thoughts which we trace in those perfect lineaments, which the sublime artists of his time have perpetuated for a wonder and a model. What loyal heart, in passing the equestrian statue of our unfortunate Charles, will refuse to mingle a sentiment of gratitude to the faithful subject, John River? who, in purchasing this noble work from the Parliament, disobeyed the order that condemned it to destruction, and preserved it in security until happier times permitted its erection on a spot already famous for the commemoration of the conjugal affection of our warlike monarch Edward the First. Here, for the last time, rested the body of his faithful Queen, ere the corse sought its final dwelling place; and on the walls of

the venerable inn blazes a record of his attachment in the cross of gold, the only visible sign remaining since the barbarous fury of puritanical zealots destroyed the ancient monument in Cheapside, reared by the same pious King, in memory of his tenderly beloved wife. The great fire was undoubtedly a blessing; and in lamenting that the noble plan of Sir Christopher Wren, for rebuilding the city, was not carried into effect, we sometimes rejoice that a relic of the olden time was thus spared by the unsettled nature of public affairs; and even now, when surveying with admiration the improvements which are daily taking place in the metropolis, we often grieve over the destruction of the meanest walls, in whose demolition is involved the last trace of worth or talent, long since consigned to the oblivion of the grave.

It is by these recollections that many a weary walk in London is beguiled—the mighty dead arise from their tombs to company our solitude—we indeed find ‘sermons in stones,’—and Smithfield, the Tower, and Whitehall, present more heart-rending tragedies than could ever be exhibited at Drury Lane or Covent Garden.

REMARKABLE MULBERRY TREE.

FROM NEILL'S HORTICULTURAL TOUR.

At Canterbury, in the neighbourhood of the Cathedral, we understood were still to be seen some remains of monastic gardens, we accordingly found a mulberry tree, two vines, and three or four walnut-trees, all of them bearing the marks of great age. The mulberry tree has a most venerable aspect. It once must have been both lofty and spreading, but has been blown down, and has laid on its side for a century or more. One old man in Canterbury remembers it in its present recumbent posture for above seventy years past, and declares that he knows of no change in it. As it appeared to be a vegetable curiosity, we particularly examined it. The remains of

the trunk measure in length $21\frac{1}{2}$ feet, and in circumference, at four feet from the root, five feet eight inches. Two large branches have risen perpendicularly, and now perform the office of stem, forming a new tree, with a double head. The fruit they bear is excellent; indeed, it is commonly said that the fruit of the oldest mulberry-trees is the best. In 1815, the berries, sold at two shillings a pottle, produced no less than six guineas. We were told that they are commonly bought up for desserts by ‘the gentlemen of the Cathedral,’ who, like their predecessors, are probably no bad judges of such matters.

ITCHING FEET.

SIR,—Among the minor evils to which the human frame is subject, there are few more tormenting than that violent itching of the feet, during severe frosty weather, caused by incipient chilblains, which is alike destructive of comfort and inimical to study. Apply to a medical man for a mixture calculated to allay this irritation, and you will receive from him a bottle of some precious stinking stuff or other, price three shillings and sixpence, which upon application proves to be totally useless. There is, however, a specific for the evil so simple and at the same time so cheap, that no one ought to be ignorant of it; 'tis merely one part muriatic acid mingled with seven parts of water, with which the feet must be well rubbed for a night or two, before going to bed, and perfect relief will be experienced.

LEX GREX.

P.S.—The application must of course be made before the skin breaks, and it will be found not only to allay the itching, but to prevent the farther progress of the chilblains. The feet may be a little tender for a short time, but this slight inconvenience will soon disappear.

EPITAPHS.

SIR,—'Tis impossible to walk through a church yard, or look into the Obituary of a magazine, without being sickened by observing a parcel of long,

fulsome epitaphs, which, as Byron says, "lie like truth, but still most truly lie," and attribute to the deceased ten thousand virtues, of which, in all probability, they never possessed ten. The following sample of this species of composition possesses, however, two beauties which are rarely met with in such things—brevity and sincerity; for it contains only two dozen words, and the wish expressed by the writer doubtless came from his heart—

Beneath this stone lies Richard Wen,
Who trusts that he shall waken up,
Before the resurrection men
Do sily come and take him up.

The best way of insuring an epitaph to your liking, is to compose one, and have it cut on a tombstone before you die, after the manner described in the following paragraph, which I copy from a provincial paper:

DIED on Saturday, September 6, 1823, Mr. William Pitt, of Wolverhampton, author of a "Topographical History of Staffordshire," and of the Agricultural Surveys of the Counties of Stafford, Worcester, &c. On a stone in Tettenhall churchyard, erected to the memory of Mrs. Pitt, wife of the above, who died some years ago, the following epitaph is inscribed:—

"Father and Lord of all, who hast
thought fit
To call to thy own mansion Mary Pitt,
Permit our grief and sorrow, left behind
By one so virtuous, pleasant, mild, and
kind;
Thro' life below'd, lamented in her end,
By husband, children, relative, and friend."

On the same stone are the annexed lines:—

'In heaven's due time, this second rhyme
Is by her husband writ,
Just to remind each friend so kind,
That here lies William Pitt.'

Underneath is a space left for the insertion of his age, and the time of his decease. CLIO.

Interesting Varieties.

THE POWER OF LOVE.

ALMIGHTY Love! thy sacred flame was
given

To purchase peace on earth, and bliss
in heav'n;

The want of thee makes wedlock often
cold,

Tho' Hymen's chain is wrought with
links of gold!

While thy sweet presence can a charm
impart,

To rivet soul to soul, and heart to heart:
E'en hearts which grief and sorrow long
have torn,

And poverty hath pierc'd with sharpest
thorn!

But 'tis the bravest, and the noblest souls,
That Love the most inspires, and most
controuls;

When Love to virtuous deeds points out
the way,

He cannot love who dares to disobey!

Impell'd by Love, the virtuous Lavalette,
Oppos'd her bosom to the shafts of fate,
And with one effort parried off the sword,
That by a thread hung o'er her death-
doom'd lord!

Arm'd with no pow'r but Love, the
peerless wife

Expos'd her own to save her husband's
life,

Brav'd all the horrors of the dungeon's
gloom,

And stay'd the woes of his impending
doom;

'Till vanquish'd fate annull'd her stern
decree,

And gave him back to life and Liberty!
When beauteous Eve in Eden's gar-
den stray'd,

Ate the curs'd apple, and mankind be-
tray'd,

No consolation could her lord receive,
He lov'd his God, but still he lov'd his
Eve!

He summon'd reason, passion, to remove,
But reason cannot quench the flame of
Love!

His mental pow'rs no argument could
find,

To tear her lovely image from his mind;
No balm could give his wounded spirit
rest,

Despair and madness rag'd within his
breast;

He seiz'd the fruit delightful to the view,
And cried, "If Eve must die, I'll
perish too!"

The listening angels his attachment saw,
And Heaven relenting, half repeal'd its
law. D.

AUTUMN.

At length gay Ceres' sultry toils are
o'er,

And teeming barns the yellow ears
contain ;
Now swells the rustic's heart with hope
no more,
Cheerless he bies his void, his fallow
reign.

The groves, half stripped, their parting
hues display,
And paint with sad variety the scene ;
Embrowned their boughs, and crimson
some, and gray,
And harder some, yet boast a lively
green.

Now evening dews along the valley
creep,
And mists obscure the rising sun de-
face ;
Now weary hinds safe in the cottage keep,
Nor longer gamble in his setting rays.

Thoughtful among the rustling leaves I
stray,
And think on youth's frail joys, that fade
and fall away.

G. S. W.

WITCHCRAFT.

The "London Chronicle," Feb. 27, 1759, contains the following paragraph:—"We hear from Wingrove, near Aylesbury, in Bucks, that a few days ago Susanna Hannokes, an elderly woman of that place, was accused by a neighbour with being a witch, for that she had bewitched her spinning-wheel, so that she could not make it go round, and offered to make oath of it before a magistrate ; on which the husband of the poor woman, in order to justify his wife, insisted upon her being tried by the Church-bible, and that the accuser should be present ; accordingly she was conducted by her husband, attended by a great concourse of people, who flocked to see the ceremony, to the parish church, where she was stripped of all her clothes to her shift and under-coat, and weighed against the bible ; when, to the no small mortification of her accuser, she out-weighed it, and was honourably acquitted of the charge. It is observable, that not eight years since, one Ruth Osborn and her husband were by the too credulous people of

that neighbourhood ducked in a pond on a like supposition, and used so ill, that the poor woman was drowned, for which Tho. Colley now hangs in chains."

HINTS TO LADIES,

ON THE CHOICE OF COLOURS IN DRESS.—Grass-Green, though a colour exceedingly pleasing and refreshing in itself, jaundices the complexion of the pale woman to such a degree as to excite little other sensations in the beholder than compassion for the poor invalid. Such females should in general choose their robes of an intire colour ; and when they wear white garments they should animate them with draperies, mantles, scarfs, ribbons, &c. of pale-pink, blossom-colour, celestial blue, lilac, dove colour, and primrose ; leaving full green, deep blue, and purple to the florid ; and amber, scarlet, orange, flame colour, and deep rose, to the brunette.

TRANS-ATLANTIC VARIETIES, OR, SELECTIONS FROM AMERICAN JOURNALS.

(Resumed from p. 344.)

SCRAPS FOR THE CREDULOUS.—A western paper mentions the following as an easy method of taking owls. When you discover one on a tree, and find that it is looking at you, all you have to do is to move quickly round the tree several times, when the owl's attention will be so firmly fixed, that forgetting the necessity of turning its body with its head, it will follow your motions with its eyes, till it wrings its head off.

The same proposes a method of taking rabbits, equally easy and effectual. "Place (says the writer) apples in the part where they frequent, after sprinkling them with snuff, and when they come to smell, the sudden effort to sneeze which they make, never fails to break their necks, and even, in some cases has been known to throw their heads a foot beyond their tails."

* A CIRCUMSTANCE occurred on the 4th inst. that may certainly be called a wonder, and will stagger the sceptics, and be good food for the credulous. Whilst a young man of this place was sitting where three men were at work at the canal near Mr. Isaac Levan's house, there suddenly appeared two crows, and directly alighted on the shoulders of one of the workmen; and continued for a few seconds to maintain their seat, without any apparent shyness, and disregarded the man, although he put up his hand to drive them off—nor did they fly off till one of the men attempted to catch them. The man on whom they alighted, immediately became pensive, and quitting his work, exclaimed, "Now I know what I have to do," and left the contract, although he had but that morning commenced working there. The other men looked upon the event as ominous that he was guilty of some unknown crime, and challenged him accordingly. He neither owned nor denied the charge, but went off deeply affected — ("New-York American," 2nd August, 1823.)

ANOTHER WONDER.—The Baltimore Chronicle states, that another wonder has been added to this wonder-finding age, in the person of an artificial lady, made at Fredericktown. These are her accomplishments—she presents her compliments to the company—writes the name of George Washington—plays chequers, and wins at domino—makes signs that she loves a rose, which she is capable of distinguishing from cotton—puts a pair of spectacles on her head to see a rose when presented, smells the flower, and kisses it three distinct times—after this exhibition is over, she presents a little basket to the company to receive whatever they may be disposed to give. What is a still greater wonder, however, is, that notwithstanding her near resemblance to a woman, she cannot talk!—("New-York Commercial Advertiser," 12th March, 1823.)

ENGLISH MANNERS.—The "New-

York American" of July 25, 1820, thus remarks upon some circumstances connected with the Meeting for the Assistance of the Spaniards in June last:—

"A great meeting has been held in London, at which Lord William Bentick presided, assisted by Lord Erskine, Sir James Mackintosh, Mr. Brougham, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Hobhouse, Mr. Lambton and others, for the purpose of raising subscriptions for the Spaniards: after many speeches, about 5,000*l.* was collected, and a committee, of which A. Baring was chairman, was appointed to receive further collections. A circumstance connected with this meeting, worth remarking perhaps, is, that the principal gentlemen who figured on the hustings, adjourned, after the business of the day, to a tavern, where they dined, and thence, according to the *Courier*, went to the House of Commons full of wine, and interrupted the business of the House by their demeanour. Such a scene in our representative chamber would furnish matter for pages of descant to those inspired writers from Brummagem, who sometimes do us the honor of travelling through our country for the sake of spying out the nakedness of the land."

The Wit's Nunchion.

LORD CHESTERFIELD's grand-father, the Marquess of Halifax, was remarkable for repartees. At the beginning of the Revolution, several persons of rank who had been very zealous and serviceable in bringing about that event, but at the same time had no great abilities, applied for some of the most considerable employments in the government. The Marquess having been consulted on the subject, answered—"I remember to have read in history, that Rome was saved by Geese, but I do not remember that those geese were made Consuls."

RABELAIS.—When this celebrated man was on his death-bed, a spark of that humour by which he was distinguished

throughout life, flashed from him. Calling for his cloak to wrap himself in, he said :—" Fetch me my domino, for blessed are they who die in the Lord."

BARTHE, the French dramatic author, was remarkable for selfishness. Calling upon a friend, whose opinion he wished to have upon a new comedy, he found him in his last moments, but notwithstanding, proposed to hear it read. "Consider," said the dying man "I have not more than an hour to live." "Aye," replied Barthe, "but this will only occupy half that time."

The pungency of Boileau's satire is well known; of its frankness the following is an instance:—The king having one day asked his opinion of some poetry, with the composition of which he had amused himself, Boileau replied—"nothing is impossible to your majesty; you have endeavoured to make bad verses, and you have succeeded."

THE MESSIAH.—Dr. Arnold, about the year 1770, performed oratorios at the little theatre in the Haymarket, at play-house prices, the terms of admission to that species of entertainment, were as high as those of the Opera. The comparative lowness of the doctor's charge, and the novelty of the compositions he performed—for his bill of fare generally consisted of a new oratorio of his own—drew full and respectable audiences. But one evening, by way of relief, he presented the public with Handel's Messiah, when the high reputation of that piece, combined with the diminished price of admission, drew such an immense crowd to the door, that when they were opened, a universal rush forced away the bar of the box money-takers, and the different tiers were instantly filled with every description of auditors. It happened that in the middle of the lower tier, a woman in a red cloak was seated. When the curtain rose, the splendour of the numerous lights, and the display of so

many performers—quite a new spectacle to her astonished optics—so dazzled and delighted her, that in the height of her happy frenzy, she exclaimed aloud, "Oh what a sight! which of them there gentlemen is the Messiah?" To which a person in one of the side boxes replied, "That's him; the little gentlemen in black velvet, sitting at the harpsichord." This excited a universal laugh at the doctor: and by his friends, he was for a long while spoken of by no other name than that of **THE MESSIAH**.

A FAVORITE winter joke of a renowned and inexhaustible punster, was, to dance about as if his feet were benumbed, that some person might ask him whether he was cold? to which, pointing to his feet, he would immediately reply,—“Cold, sir! I am cold IN THE EXTREME.”

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We are always glad to hear from T*. Has *Albumania* forsaken us? The remainder of *Curioso's* pieces shall be given immediately, and also the following articles:—"William and Molly"—"The Seducer"—"Punch"—"Manners and Superstitions of our Ancestors"—"Adulterations of Food"—"George Barnwell"—"Hints to Perambulators" and "Lines on the Death of Bloomfield."

No. 52, [price 2d.] in addition to the usual quantity of matter, will contain a frontispiece to the volume, with a title-page, preface, and copious index.

ERRATA.—P. 397, col. 1, line 11, for "duty," read "beauty." P. 400, col. 2, line 9 from the bottom, read, "Arden."

We find the commencement of "Arden" was overlooked: the tale shall be inserted as soon as we receive the conclusion.

RECEIVED.—C. Smith—Nemo—W. M.—Lips—"Epitaphs," and C.

THE NIC-NAO;

OR,

ORACLE OF KNOWLEDGE.

NO. 52.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1823.

VOL. I.

"Praise us as we are tasted; allow us as we prove;
Our head shall go bare till Merit crown it."—SHAKESPEARE.

FIRES IN COAL-MINES.

SIR,—The description given in your 46th number, of the spontaneous combustion which has taken place in the Staffordshire Coal-Mines, recalled to my recollection the following notice of the subject, which I copied from the "Monthly Magazine" for June, 1818, and which you may perhaps find room for in your work, together with the memoranda on the subject subjoined to it.

TRUTH.

Nov. 17, 1823.

"Mr. FINCH, of Birmingham, has published some facts relative to what he calls a pseudo-volcano, near the Bradley iron works in Staffordshire. The tract of ground is situated by the road side from Birmingham to Wolverhampton, about half-way between Wednesbury and Bilston. It is mentioned by Plot, in his 'Natural History of Staffordshire,' 1686, as being on fire when he wrote; and he says it was not known how long it had been so. It then occupied a space of eleven acres, but its ravages have since extended about one mile and a half in extreme length, and one mile breadth. Whether this fire originated in accident, or from the sulphur contained in the coal and pyrites, is not known, but it probably arose from the latter cause, as, in other pits, the small-coal has taken fire on being exposed to the air. As the combustible matter becomes exhausted, the hand of cultivation resumes its labour; and even in parts where the fire still exists, by carefully stopping the fissures, and preventing access of air, different crops may be raised. A neglect of these precautions sometimes causes the loss of half of the produce, while the remainder continues flourishing. About two years ago it began to penetrate the floors of some

houses in the night, and caused great alarm: four of the houses were taken down. It exhibits a red heat in this situation, and the smoke has forced its way through a bed of cinders forty feet in height. On the south side its progress has been arrested by beds of sand, which cover the coal-formation in that quarter; and on the north-east it is impeded by cultivation. At first view a stranger might suppose himself in a volcanic-region. The exterior view of the strata, exposed by the falling in of the ground, presents a surface blackened by the action of the fire, and presenting most of the porphyritic and trap-pearl colours in high perfection. The cinder-dust on which you tread, the sulphureous vapours and smoke which arise from the various parts of the surface, and the feeling of insecurity which attends your footsteps, combine to give a high degree of interest to the scene."

'Tis true, as Mr. Finch asserts, that Dr. Plot notices the above phenomenon in his "History of Staffordshire," published in 1686, but still earlier mention of it is on record, for Fuller, in his "English Worthies," 1660, closes his article on this county in the following words:—"To take our vale of Staffordshire,—I wish the pit-coals wherewith it aboundeth, may seasonably and safely be burned in their chimnies, and not have their burning ante-dated, before they be digged out of the bowels of the earth. The rather, because I have read, how in the year 1622 there was found a coal-mine actually on fire between Willingsworth and Wednesbury, in this county. I find not by what casualty this English Etna was kindled, nor how long it did continue; and, although such combustions be not so

terrible here, as in the south of Italy, where the sulphureous matter more inrageth the fury of the fire, yet it could not but cause much fright and fear to the people hereabouts."

A similar phenomenon may now be seen at Lilleshall coal-works, Shropshire; and the occurrence is not unknown in Northumberland and Durham. About the year 1648, a coal-mine at Benwell, a village near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, was accidentally set on fire by a candle; at first it burned so feebly, that the reward of half-a-crown, which was asked by a person who offered to extinguish it, was refused. It gradually increased, however, and was not finally extinguished till all the fuel was consumed, after having burned for nearly half a century.

ADULTERATIONS OF FOOD, DRINK, &c.

Of all the frauds practised by mercenary dealers, there is none more reprehensible, and at the same time more prevalent, than the sophistication of the various articles of food. This unprincipled and nefarious practice, increasing in degree as it has been found difficult of detection, is now applied to almost every commodity which can be classed among either the necessities or the luxuries of life, and is carried on to a most alarming extent in every part of the United Kingdom.

It has been pursued by men, who, from the magnitude and apparent respectability of their concerns, are the least obnoxious to public suspicion; and their successful example has called forth, among the retail dealers, a multitude of competitors in the same iniquitous course.

To such perfection of ingenuity has this system of adulterating food arrived, that spurious articles of various kinds are every where to be found, made up so skilfully as to baffle the discrimination of the most experienced judges.

Among the number of substances used in domestic economy which are now very generally found sophisticated, may be distinguished—tea, cof-

fee, bread, beer, wine, spirituous liquors, salad oil, pepper, vinegar, mustard, cream, and other articles of subsistence. Indeed, it would be difficult to mention a single article of food which is not to be met with in an adulterated state; and there are some substances which are scarcely ever to be procured genuine.

Some of these spurious compounds are comparatively harmless when used as food; and as in these cases, merely substances of inferior value are substituted for more costly and genuine ingredients, the sophistication, though it may affect our purse, does not injure our health. Of this kind are the manufacture of fictitious pepper, the adulterations of mustard, vinegar, cream, &c. Others, however, are highly deleterious; and to this class belong the adulterations of beer, wines, spirituous liquors, pickles, salad-oil, and many others.

There are particular chemists who make it a regular trade to supply drugs, or nefarious preparations to the unprincipled brewer of porter or ale; others perform the same office to the wine or spirit-merchant; and others again to the grocer and the oil-man. The operators carry on their process chiefly in secrecy, and under some delusive firm, with the ostensible denotements of a fair and lawful establishment. These illicit pursuits have assumed all the order and method of a regular trade; they may severally claim to be distinguished as an art and mystery; for the workmen employed in them are often wholly ignorant of the nature of the substances which pass through their hands, and of the purposes to which they are ultimately applied.

To elude the vigilance of the inquisitive, to defeat the scrutiny of the revenue-officer, and to ensure the secrecy of these mysteries, the processes are very ingeniously divided and subdivided among individual operators, and the manufacture is purposely carried on in separate establishments. The task of proportioning the ingredients for use is assigned to one individual, while the composition and preparation of them may be said to form

a distinct part of the business, and is entrusted to another workman. Most of the articles are transmitted to the consumer in a disguised state, or in such a form that their real nature cannot possibly be detected by the unwary. Thus the extract of *coccus indicus*, employed by the fraudulent manufacturers of malt-liquors to impart an intoxicating quality to porter or ales, is known in the market by the name of black-extract, ostensibly destined for the use of tanners and dyers. It is obtained by boiling the berries of the *coccus indicus* in water, and converting, by a subsequent evaporation, this decoction into a stiff black tenacious mass, possessing in a high degree, the narcotic and intoxicating quality of the poisonous berry from which it is prepared. Another substance, composed of extract of quassia and liquorice juice, used by fraudulent brewers to economise both malt and hops, is technically called *mulum*. (See No. 19, p. 148.)

The quantities of *coccus indicus* berries, as well as of black-extract, imported into this country for adulterating malt liquors, are enormous. It forms a considerable branch of commerce in the hands of a few brokers: yet, singular as it may seem, no inquiry appears to have been hitherto made by the officers of the revenue respecting its application. Many other substances employed in the adulteration of beer, ale, and spirituous liquors, are in a similar manner intentionally disguised; and of the persons by whom they are purchased, a great number are totally unacquainted with their nature or composition.

An extract, said to be innocent, sold in casks, containing from half a cwt. to five cwt. by the brewers' druggists, under the name of *bittern*, is composed of calcined sulphate of iron (*copperas*), extract of *coccus indicus* berries, extract of quassia, and Spanish liquorice.

Vast numbers of dealers, of the highest respectability, vend to their customers articles absolutely poisonous, which they themselves consider as

harmless, and which they would not offer for sale, were they apprised of the spurious and pernicious nature of the compounds, and of the purpose to which they were destined.

The baker asserts that he does not put alum into bread; but he is well aware that, in purchasing a certain quantity of flour, he must take a sack of "sharp whites" (a term given to flour contaminated with a quantity of alum), without which it would be impossible for him to produce light, white, and porous bread, from a half-spoiled material.

The wholesale mealman frequently purchases this spurious commodity (which forms a separate branch of business in the hands of certain individuals), in order to enable himself to sell his decayed and half-spoiled flour.

Other individuals furnish the baker with alum mixed up with salt, under the obscure denomination of stuff. There are wholesale manufacturing chemists whose sole business is to crystallize alum, in such a form as will adapt this salt to the purpose of being mixed in a crystalline state with the crystals of common salt, to disguise the character of the compound. The mixture called stuff, is composed of one part of alum, in minute crystals, and three of common salt. In many other trades a similar mode of proceeding prevails. Potatoes are soaked in water to augment their weight.

The practise of sophisticating the necessaries of life, being reduced to systematic regularity, is ranked by public opinion among other mercantile pursuits; and is not only regarded with less disgust than formerly, but is almost generally esteemed as a justifiable way to wealth. It is really astonishing that the penal law is not more effectually enforced against practices so inimical to the public welfare. The man who robs a fellow-subject of a few shillings on the highway, is sentenced to death; while he who distributes a slow poison to a whole community, escapes unpunished.

Thus devoted to disease by baker,

brewer, grocer, &c. the physician is called to our assistance; but here again the pernicious system of fraud, as it has given the blow, steps in to defeat the remedy.

Nine-tenths of the most potent drugs and chemical preparations used in pharmacy, are vended in a sophisticated state by dealers who would be the last to be suspected. It is well known, that in the article of Peruvian Bark, there is a variety of species inferior to the genuine; that too little discrimination is exercised by the collectors of this precious medicament; that it is carelessly assorted, and is frequently packed in green hides; that much of it arrives in Spain in a half-decayed state, mixed with fragments of other vegetables and various extraneous substances; and in this state is distributed throughout Europe.

But as if this were not a sufficient deterioration, the public are often served with a spurious compound of mahogany sawdust and oak wood, ground into powder mixed with a proportion of good quinquina, and sold as genuine bark powder.

Every chemist knows that there are mills constantly at work in this metropolis, which furnish bark-powder at a much cheaper rate than the substance can be procured for in its natural state. The price of the best genuine bark, upon an average, is not lower than twelve shillings the pound; but immense quantities of powder-bark are supplied to the apothecaries at three or four shillings a pound.

Most of the arrow-root sold by druggists, is a mixture of potatoe starch and arrow root. The same system of adulteration extends to articles used in various trades and manufactures. For instance, linen tape, and various other household commodities of that kind, instead of being manufactured of linen thread only, are made up of linen and cotton. Colours for painting, not only those used by artists, but also the coarser colours used by the common house-painter, are more or less adulterated.

Soap used in house-keeping is fre-

quently adulterated with a considerable portion of fine white clay, brought from St. Stephens, in Cornwall. In the manufacturing of printing paper, a large quantity of plaster of Paris is added to the paper stuff, to increase the weight of the manufactured article. The selvage of cloth is often dyed with a permanent colour, and artfully stitched to the edge of cloth dyed with a fugitive dye. The frauds committed in the tanning of skin, and in the manufacture of cutlery and jewellery, exceed belief.

ON THE DEATH OF ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

I'll weep for thee when evening grey
Floats calmly o'er the darkening plain,
And shuts the bud, and woos the night,
With many a wild Eolian strain.

And if, amidst the various sounds
That melt along the charmed air,
Excelling tones of pathos breathe,
I'll deem thine own sweet harp is there.

I'll weep for thee when blithsome Spring
In robes of green the earth arrays,
And hill and glen, and wild-wood bower
Resound her merry roundelays.

For ah! among her vocal shades,
Thy Doric pipe shall tune no more
Those songs, whose magic sweetness
thrill'd
Like home-thoughts on a foreign shore.

The sun shall take its golden round,
And wake the world to life and joy;
But brighter beams from heaven shall
gild

The grave of Giles, the FARMER'S
Boy!

Sep. 1823.

THALIA [D.]

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ALBUMANIA'S welcome packet came safely to hand; a more particular notice of its contents shall be given next week. The remainder of "Arden of Feversham" having been received, the tale will be commenced immediately.

RECEIVED—"The Poet in Distress"
—Maloc—Lucy Faulkner—Tim—and
J. P.

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An ingenious combination of an electric lighting station and a city water works is operating successfully in a small German town. During the day when the consumption of water is greatest the station accumulators are charged and the water supply is worked by the steam pump. When the accumulators are charged and in the morning before the boilers are heated up the electrically driven pump is worked from the accumulators in case of a large demand for water. In the evening when the lamps are turned on the current is taken direct from the dynamo and at 11 o'clock, when the street arc lamps are cut out, whatever further supply of current is necessary is taken from the accumulators. If a fire should occur in the night a full supply of water is instantly available. On the sounding of the alarm the attendant at the station starts the electric pump and one compressor. The perfect success of this plan has been proved on several occasions and the inhabitants of the little town are proud of their compact and efficient plant, which gives them good and cheap lighting, good drinking water and a sufficient supply of water for all the purposes of fire extinction. The station is operated at a very low cost. By employing automatic current regulators, automatic oiling devices on all the moving parts of the steam engine and on the dynamos and motors the working of the plant is so simplified that one engine driver and a stoker can look after the whole installation.

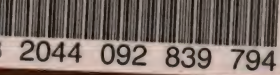
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